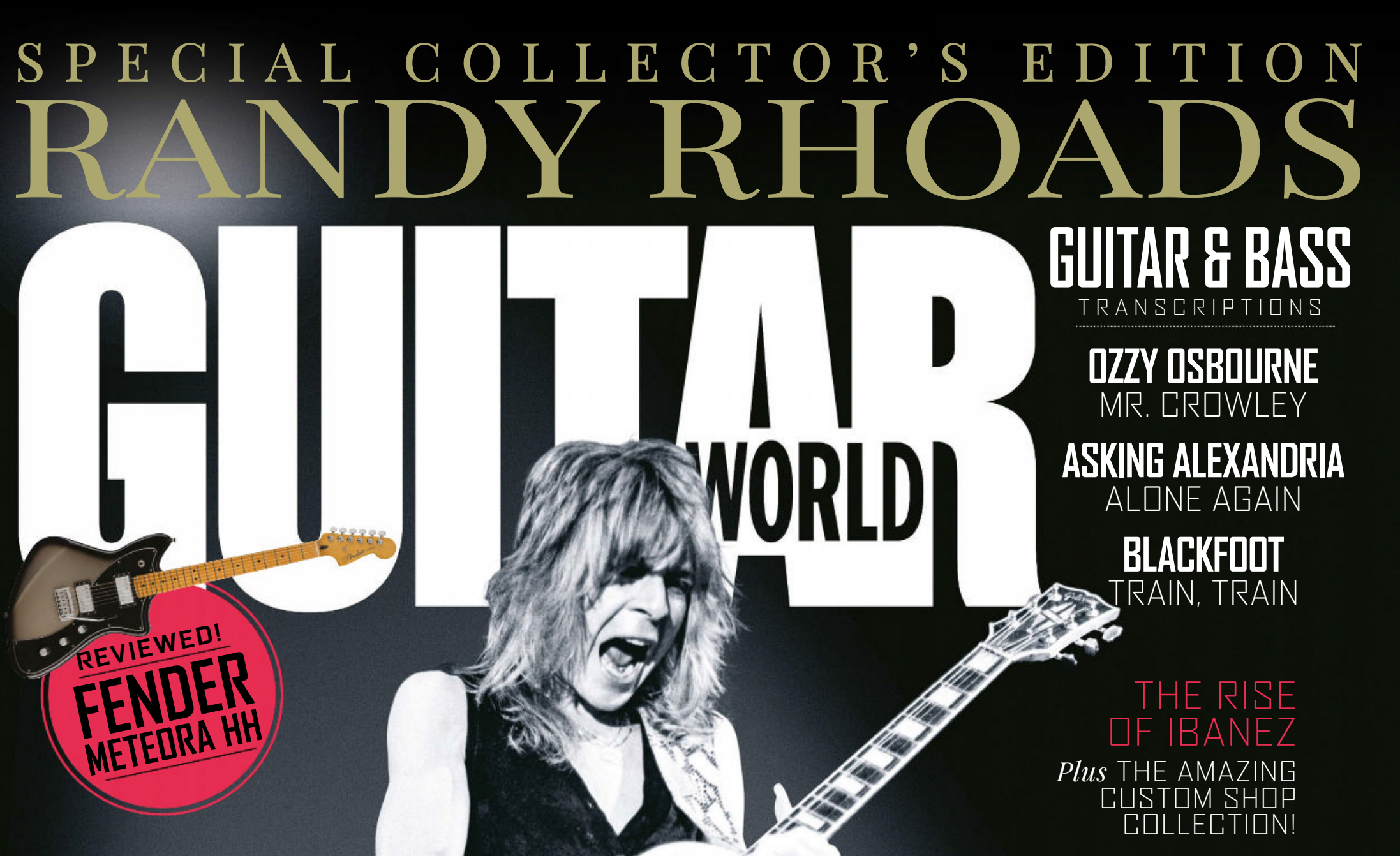
SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

RANDY RHOADS

GUITAR WORLD



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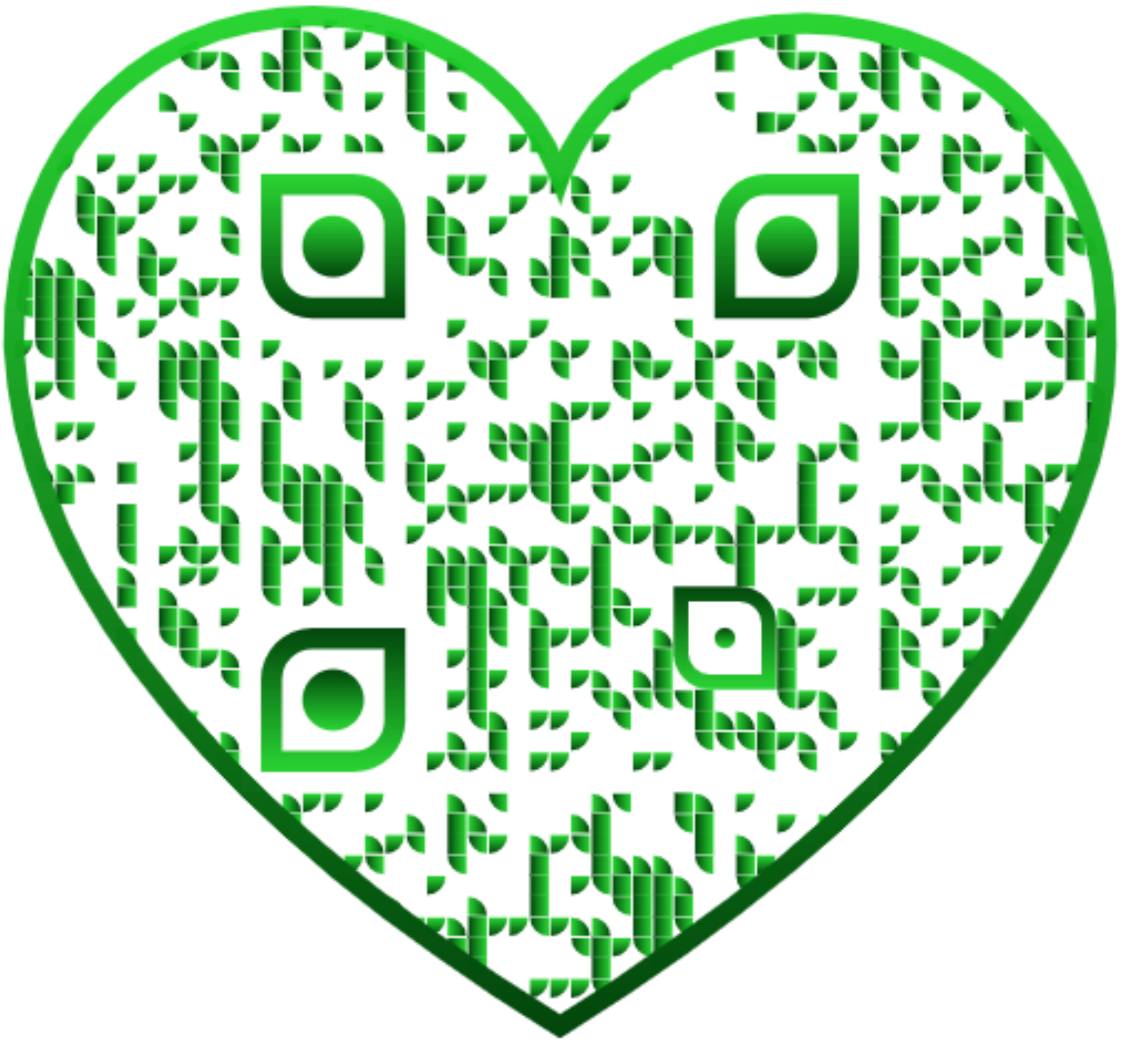

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Forty years after his tragic death at age 25 — and one year after his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame — *GW* pulls out all the stops to honor the legendary Randy Rhoads. We've got exclusive input from our all-star panel, including **Zakk Wylde, Dave Mustaine, Kirk Hammett, Tom Morello, Nita Strauss, Paul Gilbert, Richie Faulkner, Rudy Sarzo, Courtney Cox, Doug Aldrich, Phil X** and many more, plus a deluxe lesson with video, pedalboard facts, rare photos, an interview with Ozzy producer **Max Norman**, plus an update on Rhoads' "lost" Jackson RR3 — and the results of our "What's Randy's greatest guitar solo?" poll, featuring bonus input from Zakk, Kirk, Dave, Nita and more

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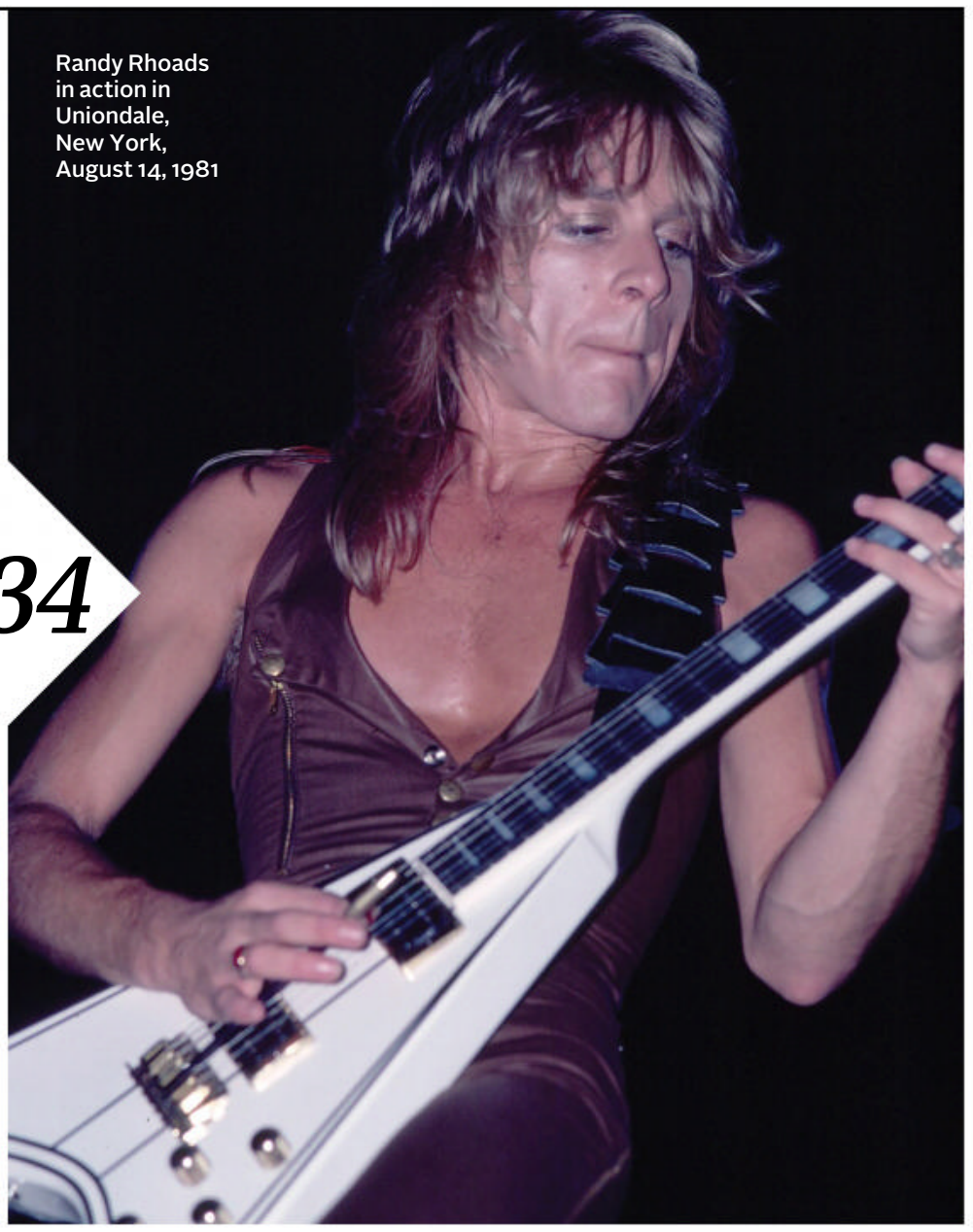
The ascension of Ibanez — as we know it today — started 50 years ago. This month, Chris Gill delves into the rise of one of the world's top guitar brands. Plus, an inside look at the company's remarkable new Custom Shop Collection!



Randy Rhoads in action in Uniondale, New York, August 14, 1981

GARY GERSHOFF/GETTY IMAGES

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WOODSHED

VOL. 43 | NO. 7 | JULY 2022

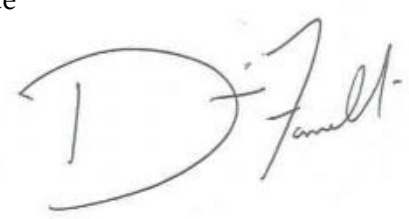
THE LONG AND WINDING RHOADS

THAT'S NOT JUST a semi-clever (and horribly overused) headline! It also happens to perfectly describe this issue's sprawling, multi-part tribute to Randy Rhoads, who tragically left us 40 years ago. Most of our Rhoads tribute was penned by Nick Bowcott of Grim Reaper fame, a man (and damn-talented guitarist!) who actually got to meet Rhoads in the U.K. in 1981. But let me also call your attention to another piece of the oversized Rhoads pie — "Passing It On" (page 47) by Alan di Perna, who follows up on the Sean Michael Clegg/Jackson RR3 story he wrote for the April 2007 issue of *GW*. It's one of those cool full-circle moments that happen so rarely in *Guitar World* land.

BTW, Rhoads is seen as one of those guitarists who's "always on the cover," but this issue marks his very first cover appearance since July 2011. I remember it well; it was the first issue to come out after I'd started working here that April.

NEW-LOOK TUNE-UPS: Technically speaking, the only *real* change to this month's Tune-Ups section is the return of Introducing (page 18), but that mini addition heralds a few more changes that are loitering in the wings, including the return of 60 Minutes. I've always thought a magazine's "front of book" section should be lively and fun, and I believe we're getting there. Hey, I'm having fun!

CORRECTIONS: The Frank Zappa feature in the March 2022 issue had a few, um, issues. Zappa's private studio was/is known as Utility Muffin Research Kitchen, but we called it United Muffin Research Kitchen. We also said Lady Gaga owns Zappa's old Hollywood Hills home, but — as bad luck would have it — she sold the house *literally* between the time the story was submitted and the time it was published. Lastly, although we said Zappa's appearance at the Sports Hall in Prague in 1991 was his last recorded guitar performance, it actually was his penultimate recorded guitar performance. The Prague date was June 24, 1991, followed by his show in Budapest at the "Farewell Festival" on June 30, 1991.



DAMIAN FANELLI
Editor-in-Chief

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READER ART

OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com** with a scan of the image!

ACE FREHLEY BY WILLIE HOWARD

JIMI HENDRIX BY J. A. STARKEY

DEFENDERS *of the Faith*

Grace Bowers

AGE: 15
LOCATION: Nashville, TN
GUITARS: 1961 Gibson SG Special, 2018 Gibson Honeyburst Tribute, 2016 Martin Road Series
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: T. Rex "Baby Boomerang," Blackberry Smoke "Everybody Knows She's Mine," Goodbye June "Step Aside"
GEAR I WANT MOST: Gibson Flying V

Jim Crye

AGE: 48
LOCATION: Fort Worth, TX
GUITARS: Nineties Gibson Les Paul
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Ozzy Osbourne "Diary of a Madman," Pantera "5 Minutes Alone," Van Halen "Somebody Get Me a Doctor"
GEAR I WANT MOST: Eighties San Dimas Strat-head Charvel

Mike Brooks

AGE: 55
LOCATION: Detroit Rock City
GUITARS: Epiphone Les Paul, Squire Fender Strat
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Originals for my band, Blackmail, also Jimi Hendrix "Fire," Ozzy Osbourne "Crazy Train," Derek and the Dominos "Layla," Van Halen "Unchained"
GEAR I WANT MOST: EVH 5150 combo

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[*from left*] Claudio Sanchez, Travis Stever, Zach Cooper and Josh Eppard

Return of the Jedis

COHEED AND CAMBRIA'S CLAUDIO SANCHEZ AND TRAVIS STEVER SHUTTLE YOU DEEP INSIDE THEIR LATEST SCI-FI JOURNEY, *VAXIS II: A WINDOW OF THE WAKING MIND*

By Gregory Adams

COHEED AND CAMBRIA'S Claudio Sanchez is one of the rare artists who doubles as both guitar hero and your favorite author. For more than two decades, he and the rest of the Nyack, New York-formed quartet have crafted fascinatingly complex, yet hook-loaded volumes of post-hardcore-infused prog. Likewise, Sanchez's lyrics across several albums — along with adjoining comic books and novellas — have rolled out the richly intricate, galaxy-exploring storyline broadly billed as *The Armory Wars;* his sci-fi conceit continues with the band's new *Vaxis II: A Window of the Waking Mind*. Coheed and Cambria's 10th album is the second to follow characters Nea and Nostrand, a pair of post-apocalyptic would-be bank robbers that have just escaped a prison planet with their newborn son, the titular and currently incommunicative Vaxis.

"Their son doesn't interact with the plane of existence that they're on, so they think a pharmaceutical could help cure him, but what they don't understand is that [*Vaxis*] is actually a highly evolved version of the human species," Sanchez says of the starting point of the band's latest epic.

This is all to say that *Vaxis II* delivers even more high-concept lore-building from the group — impenetrable, perhaps, to listeners just there for the blazing licks and effects-slathered accents Sanchez and co-guitarist Travis Stever course through the 13-song release, and potentially intimidating to a younger generation of prog listeners jumping in for the very first time. On the other hand, Sanchez explains that the band's A&R person recently likened the appeal of Coheed and Cambria's immersive catalog to one of pop culture's most engaging and enduring space sagas.

"It was a great conversation: 'What does a new Coheed fan look like coming into this, 20 years into our career,'" he recalls. "It must be something not unlike *Star Wars*. You're young, you get into *The Force Awakens* only to find out that there's this whole mythos for you to go back and [*discover*]. I was excited when somebody said that to me, because they got it — for a long time nobody got it. This isn't just about music; this is about a culture that this band has been trying to develop since 2002, but it was just a hard thing for people to swallow [*in the beginning*]."

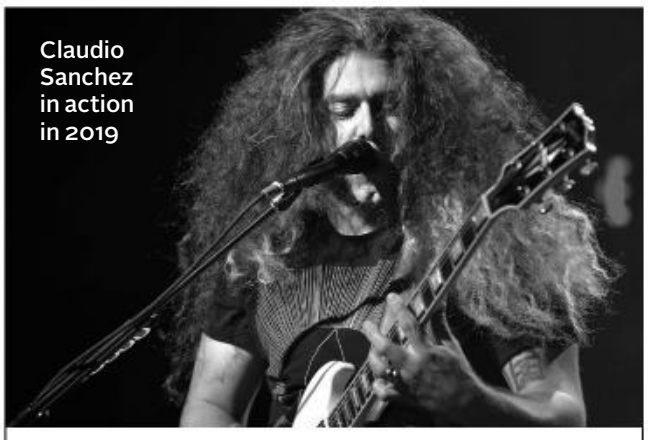
That Sanchez and Stever are getting into the details of *Vaxis II* over Zoom from the backstage of Kansas City's Uptown Theater — midway through their first post-

ALEXANDRA GAVILLET

Covid restrictions tour — should be a clue that Coheed and Cambria have become a cultural force in their own right.

While part of the continuum, *Vaxis II* was made differently from its predecessor, 2018's *Vaxis I: The Unheavenly Creatures*. Covid measures were still in full swing when tracking began, with the band opting for a more unorthodox, yet pandemic-appropriate remote-and-studio hybrid model. Sanchez recorded at home in New York City and with producer Zakk Cervini in North Hollywood, while Stever tracked at his home studio in upstate New York. Much of Stever's work had initially been cooked up through his Reason interface with a British-style overdrive, but he ultimately let Sanchez and Cervini recontextualize his contributions how they saw fit. Sanchez took his bandmate up on the offer most drastically on "Blood," shifting the meter of Stever's choppy phrases to cushion his own Andy Summers-style trinote arpeggios. Sanchez explains: "He cut it on the one, but I moved the riff over so it would play more with the main rhythm — so that they would dance together as opposed to play off each other."

Vaxis II presents plenty of similarly unified fronts — take how Sanchez and Stever lock into the hard-pound downstrokes in the chorus to pop-punk anthem "The Liars Club," or their Maiden-esque metal guitarmonies mid-way through "Ladders of Supremacy" — but Stever also realized at some point during the band's journey that the writ large maximalism of Coheed



Claudio Sanchez in action in 2019

"This isn't just about music; this is about a culture that this band has been trying to develop since 2002"
— CLAUDIO SANCHEZ

can sometimes benefit from a lighter touch on his end. Stever explains, "I have a tendency to look at something and [*think*], 'Where am I going to fit on this?' But it's also [*about*] taking a step back and going, 'Do I need to?'"

With the players often trading off on lead and rhythm duties, Stever reveals that one of his favorite moments on the album was adding a "simple, pokey, staccato" rhythm beneath Sanchez's wilding lead on "The Liars Club." "Believe me, there are times where just want to fuckin' go 'reeer' [*with a lead, but*] that kind of shit — when it fits perfectly — is special to me."

As the second installment of a planned five-act arc, *Vaxis II* follows plot beats introduced on 2018's *Vaxis I: The Unheavenly Creatures*. It likewise features a number of musical callbacks. The deceptively gleeful main riff of the former's "Old Flames," for instance, is reimagined on the new album's "The Embers of Fire" via ornate MIDI orchestration, while also coming into play on the otherwise sinisterly swayed "Ladders of Supremacy," a nearly seven-minute suite of imperial marching beats, proggy pivots and doom-laden melodies.

Guitar-wise, Stever leaned on a long-loved goldtop Les Paul for the *Vaxis II* sessions. Sanchez's revolving arsenal included a Nineties-era SG, a '64 Gibson LG acoustic and an eight-string Steph Carpenter signature ESP he put to use while chunking through the ultra-low melodies of "Lover Murder One" and "Bad Man." "[*Cervini*] found [*those songs*] so interesting because they were pop tunes utilizing this heavy metal instrument," Sanchez says. Fittingly, Stever admits that he tried to channel "Beat It"-period Steve Lukather with his own slashing throughout "Love Murder One," while the tune's equally synth-slathered approach and Sanchez's impassioned vibrato vocal suggest an alternate universe where Coheed and Cambria started ghostwriting for the Weeknd. Nevertheless, commingling crossover appeal with detuned dark pop and high-flying guitar play failed to throw Coheed and Cambria off their axis.

ABOVE: JOHNNY LOUIS/GETTY IMAGES

INTRODUCING

The SoapGirls
In My Skin *(SoapGirls)*

SOUND French-born (but South Africa-raised) sisters Noemie and Camille Debray have built a rep for excessive, debauched live shows. Combining elements of shoegaze, punk and Riot Grrrl, the SoapGirls' *In My Skin* blends insanely hooky songs, smooth, sweet vocals and rocking guitars to carve out their own unique sonic signature.
KEY TRACK "Breathe"

Airacobra
Midwestern Steel *(Airacobra)*

SOUND The debut album from these Champaign, Illinois, rockers harkens back to the classic sounds of late-Seventies/early Eighties metal — think furious, galloping riffs and pounding double bass drums. Guitarist TJ peels off economical, explosively dynamic, face-melting solos, while singer Dusty Raymer's excoriatingly ferocious vocals convey defiance, menace and impending doom.
KEY TRACK "Midwestern Steel"

Brave Rival
Life's Machine *(Brave Rival Records)*

SOUND U.K.-based Brave Rival's creamy, blues-fuelled rock recalls the FM radio-dominating giants of the Seventies but adds a heavy dose of Zep-worthy riffage on *Life's Machine*, their first album. Dual vocalists Chloe Josephine and Lindsey Bonnick can range from Janis Joplin to Ann Wilson in a heartbeat, while Ed Clarke's biting solos take no prisoners.
KEY TRACK "Guilty Love"
— Mark McStea

INTRODUCING (FROM LEFT): SAM DEBRAY, KAYLEE WILLIAMSON, ROB BLACKHAM

A Like-New '57 Teddy

...AND OTHER NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

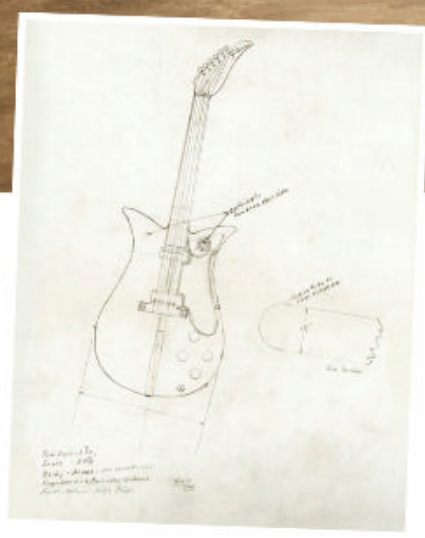
AS PRESIDENT OF Gibson Guitars from 1950 to 1966, Ted McCarty put a Flying V-shaped rocket under the electric guitar industry. Along with overseeing the development of iconic Gibson models like the Les Paul, SG, Firebird and ES-335, he designed the Tune-o-matic bridge and helped popularize the use of humbucker pickups.

In the latter half of the Fifties, McCarty caught wind of some disparaging comments from competitor Leo Fender, who apparently found Gibson's output old-fashioned. This provoked McCarty to produce flashier, more cutting-edge guitar models such as the Explorer, the Moderne and, yes, the Flying V.

During that period of intense creativity, McCarty sketched a guitar that would have looked right at home in the Jetsons' apartment. Signed and dated March 18, 1957, the drawing depicts a swanky-looking ax with a scimitar headstock, double Florentine cutaways and a walnut strip running through the middle of the body.

Sixty-five long years later, Gibson's staff has unearthed that design from the vault and brought it to life. The Theodore — the first offering from the new Gibson Archive Collection — made its debut on the anniversary of its draft's creation: March 18. That release date matches the number of Theodore guitars that have been made: 318.

The Theodore comes in three different colors: Natural, Cherry and Ebony. Its alder body, Custom Soapbar P-90 pickups and mahogany neck give it strong tone, resonance and sustain, and its once-futuristic, now-retro look sets it apart from any other guitar in today's world. —*Damon Orion*



The Gibson Theodore in sketch form [*left*] and in the flesh

TREMONTI SINGS SINATRA!

ALTER BRIDGE'S MARK Tremonti has announced a new covers album, *Tremonti Sings Sinatra*, on which he trades electric guitar riffing for sultry crooning as he takes on a series of classic songs by Frank Sinatra. Scheduled to arrive May 27, the album was created in partnership with the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) — which helps support individuals with Down syndrome and their families — and will be released through a new charity initiative created by Tremonti called Take a Chance for Charity. Proceeds will go toward the NDSS.

The cause is close to Tremonti, as his daughter Stella was born with Down syndrome last March. "For years, I've loved singing along to Frank's songs," Tremonti says. "One night, I found an old video of him performing 'The Song Is You' from 1944. It made me want to dive into his vocal approach. I was all in and I wanted to do something with it. When we found out about our daughter Stella's Down syndrome diagnosis, the stars aligned. My obsession with Sinatra had its reason. Frank Sinatra raised more than a billion dollars for charity, and that is a fact I wish the public knew more about. Beneath his cool and calm persona, he had a big heart." — *Sam Roche*

THE WORLD OF MARTY STUART

COUNTRY SINGER AND ace guitar slinger Marty Stuart left his family's home in Philadelphia, Mississippi, at age 13 to tour with bluegrass legend Lester Flatt. By his early 20s, he was backing Johnny Cash, leading to a lifelong friendship. Cash's personal gloss black Martin D-35 is one of many guitars on display in "The World of Marty Stuart," an exhibit of musical artifacts Stuart has collected at the Museum of Mississippi History in Jackson. Other important guitars on display include A.P. Carter's 1936 Martin 000-28 and guitars owned by Pops Staples, Carl Perkins, Charley Pride and Merle Haggard. The exhibit runs through December. — *Jim Beaugez*

PRS TAKES NASHVILLE

BACK IN MID March, PRS Guitars announced the opening of their new artist showroom — a cozy space nestled within the happenin' SoundCheck Nashville rehearsal studios. The showroom is equipped with the newest PRS axes and amps, all of which are available to artists (and there are more than a few artists in Nashville) to check out, borrow and road test. The showroom is open to artists 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays — and by appointment.

"[*This new*] showroom will provide an easily accessible, inspiring space for musicians to connect while fostering a deeper relationship between PRS and artists in the Nashville region," says Bev Fowler, PRS's director of artist relations.

— *Damian Fanelli*

Angie Swan — shown solo and [*above*] with David Byrne. "There are 12 of us on stage, and we consider the techs as additional band members because, for me, [*the tech*] is literally acting as my feet," Swan says

Angie Swan

THE GUITARIST FOR DAVID BYRNE'S AMERICAN UTOPIA TAKES US BEHIND THE SCENES

By Jim Beaugez

DAVID BYRNE'S HUGELY successful, 26-country *American Utopia* world tour broke a lot of rules on the way to earning a Broadway residency and ultimately a Spike Lee-directed film. For starters, the stage was entirely clean despite being a fully live performance. Plus, half of the 12-piece band were drummers playing marching-band style, each covering a different part of the rhythm.

But guitarist Angie Swan had her own hurdles to clear during the show's four-year run, which reached its finale in April. The highly choreographed performances of songs from throughout Byrne's career, including the Talking Heads classic "Burning Down the House," required a recalibration of how she played her instrument.

"I've learned to practice the way I'm going to perform," Swan says. "Standing up and playing feels different than sitting down, and in most gig settings you're going to be standing up anyway, so you might as well practice that way. And being able to move around and treat your whole body as a metronome — your guitar is your instrument, but at the same time, your body is the instrument, as well."

Removing amplifiers and pedalboards from the stage also led to marked changes in the way Swan, who previously played with CeeLo Green and others, performed the 22-song set. Instead of having her 1964 Fender Twin onstage, she only heard it in modeled form via a Kemper Profiler that came through her in-ear monitors. She relied on her tech to switch her amp and effects settings.

"There are 12 of us on stage, and we consider the techs as additional band members because, for me, he's literally acting as my feet," she says.

Swan, who plans to release her own album this summer, grew up in a guitar-loving household in Milwaukee, with Robert Cray and Stevie Ray Vaughan in rotation and Joe Satriani's *Surfing with the Alien* accompanying the Swan family on road trips. She was mesmerized watching players like Jennifer Batten perform with Michael Jackson on MTV. But while she has the chops to shred, she takes a team-player approach to her gigs.

"It's really important to me to be able to lock in with everybody and not overplay. If you get a chance to break away from that and solo, then you take that chance," she says. "I've learned over time that less is more in playing settings, and that's helped me get gigs and keep gigs."

"I've learned over time that less is more in playing settings, and that's helped me get gigs and keep gigs"

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Knaggs Kenai, Novo Serus
- **AMPS** 1964 Fender Twin, Supro, Kemper Profiler

ABOVE: PROVIDED INSET: DAVE SIMPSON/WIREIMAGE

"Do not be afraid to be yourself," says Ty Tabor

INQUIRER
TY TABOR

THE KING'S X MAN STEPS OUT WITH A NEW SOLO ALBUM

Q: What do you recall about your first gig?

It was a bluegrass gig I did when I was very young. By the time I was 13 we'd already played a few festivals and had opened up for Lester Flatt, Minnie Pearl, Grandpa Jones, all the bluegrass gods of the time. To open for them as a kid was amazing. We kind of changed the name of our band every time we went out and played. The band was basically me, my dad, my brother, my dad's best friend and his son — a two-family thing that was a cool little bluegrass outfit.

Q: Ever have an embarrassing moment on stage?

Yes, years ago when [*King's X*] were playing in clubs, just doing cover tunes and stuff. My parents showed up at a club where we were playing just to hear a few songs. I don't like to play in front of my parents and never have. They showed up the moment I was about to play the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun," a song I could play in my sleep. But at that exact moment, seeing my parents, I just froze! I stood there thinking, "How does this song go?" And behind me, Doug [*Pinnick*] and Jerry [*Gaskill*] were dying from laughter.

Q: What's your favorite piece of gear?

It's actually two pieces because they go together — my late-Seventies Lab Series L5 amp with my original 1983 Fender Elite Stratocaster. My Strat Elite is nothing like the modern Strat Elite, which has nothing whatsoever to do with that original guitar. The original Elite has active electronics and push-button on-off switches where you can use all three pickups or the first or two — or any combination. And it has the heavier, more expensive gold hardware. That's what I used on the first four King's X albums.

Q: What's it like baring your soul on your new solo album, *Shades*?

Albums are diaries, and diaries are painful to look at or read. I have to put myself out there to get this stuff out there, and then sometimes I'll go, "Oh man, I hope somebody likes that." I don't care to listen to it too much myself. On the new album there's a song called "Leaves Falling Down"; I listened to that again the other day, and when the lead came up, and this rarely happens to me, I actually liked the lead I had done! I don't normally like my leads, but on that song, I went, "Okay, that is alright!" That's about as good as I get.

Q: What's your writing process?

I don't write for myself, I just write — and if it's time for a solo album and I've been writing, then I'll have some songs I can look at, and if I don't like them, I'll try and write more. I don't normally think about that when I'm writing. I just write songs, and then if King's X decides we're going to do something, I'll have some songs to throw into the pile. The same goes with the Jelly Jam or whatever; I'll just write and whatever is coming up — that's what I'll use the songs for.

Q: Got any advice for younger players?

Do not be afraid to be yourself. It took me so many years to be okay with how I play guitar. You always hear these other things in guitar players that you fall in love with, and then you want to do that too. That, for me, was always a rabbit hole that didn't get me anywhere. I started realizing this when I heard the things I had done back then, and I accepted that it was just the way I sounded. I got to a point where I gave up and just said, "This is just who I am, so just accept it and move on!" The sooner anybody does that for themselves, the happier they'll be — and probably more creative too. — *Joe Matera*

WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST

TOM S. ENGLUND & HENRIK DANHAGE
OF EVERGREY

(Tom, left) "Comfortably Numb"
Pink Floyd

The first notes after that last chorus just speak to me. Gilmour's playing sounds like singing; it did when I first heard it, and it still does. It has influenced my playing in more ways than I understand, I think, mostly in terms of the value of a great melody. Of course, his whammy bar vibrato hits me in the feels!

(Henrik, right) "Blue Powder"
Steve Vai

This song sums up this amazing guitar player perfectly. It's wild and crazy yet with very controlled playing, and the chops are on 11. The perfect "guitar hero" song!

(both) "Far Beyond the Sun"
Yngwie Malmsteen

The first time we heard it, it was like an alien was playing; we couldn't understand or visualize some of the techniques Yngwie was using. The volume-knob swells with the delay, the sense of melody, the vibrato, the bends, the intonation, the speed, the harmonies, the clean perfection with that small amount of distortion. Still mind blowing!

(Tom) "Wasted Years"
Iron Maiden

This is such a well-composed solo. I know it by heart and can sing it out loud — every single vibrato and every bend. What a quality that is in terms of playing a solo. I could mention so many more of his, but this is a great example. Memorable, sing-along-friendly and well-structured!

(Henrik) "Eruption"
Van Halen

The biggest chapter for high-energy rock guitar — and such an influence. The sound is massive and the playing is fantastic. EVH changed rock guitar forever.

EVERGREY'S NEW ALBUM, *A HEARTLESS PORTRAIT (THE ORPHEAN TESTAMENT)*, IS OUT NOW VIA NAPALM RECORDS.

LEFT: REAMES PHOTOGRAPHY RIGHT: PATRIC ULLAEUS

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Charlie Griffiths in six-string (Kiesel) mode

Charlie Griffiths

FOR HIS FIRST-EVER SOLO OUTING, THE LONGTIME HAKEN GUITARIST TRADED IN HIS EIGHT-STRING FOR A SIX-STRING — "IT ALMOST DOES FEEL LIKE A TOY GUITAR"

By Gregory Adams

HAKEN GUITARIST CHARLIE Griffiths' new *Tiktaalika* solo album is all about evolution. Its title nods to the 375-million-year-old Tiktaalik fish species that was able to prop itself up and stand on its sturdy fins, acting as a transitional class between ocean-bound fish and four-legged land-walkers. Griffiths is taking an epic leap of his own with his first-ever solo release. While initially conceived as a 20-minute suite, *Tiktaalika* ultimately grew into a nine-song fever dream that merges Haken-style complexity with elements of Bay Area thrash, girder-folding metalcore and djent-jazz fusion. Despite the artistic growth, Griffiths technically devolved his playing style by snipping a pair of strings off his usual eight-string approach.

"After 10 years of focusing on eight-string playing with Haken, it was kind of a different viewpoint," Griffiths says of scaling down, noting that the six-string Kiesel Type-X used on the sessions was set to a comparatively less subsonic, but still chewy drop-D. "When your hands get used to [*an eight-string's*] wider neck and longer scale, it almost does feel like a toy guitar when you pick up the six-string again, [*but*] you have fun doing wide stretches; bending strings is much easier."

In terms of tone, Griffiths dove into the gnarly whammy and phaser effects of Neural DSP's Archetype: Gojira plug-in for much of *Tiktaalika*'s elastic leadwork. While the guitarist erupts with blistering runs and rubber-room vibrato on centrepiece "In Alluvium," Griffiths admits he also cut what had initially been one of the album's biggest leads in half so that Dream Theater's Jordan Rudess could tag in for an equally warp-speed synth solo.

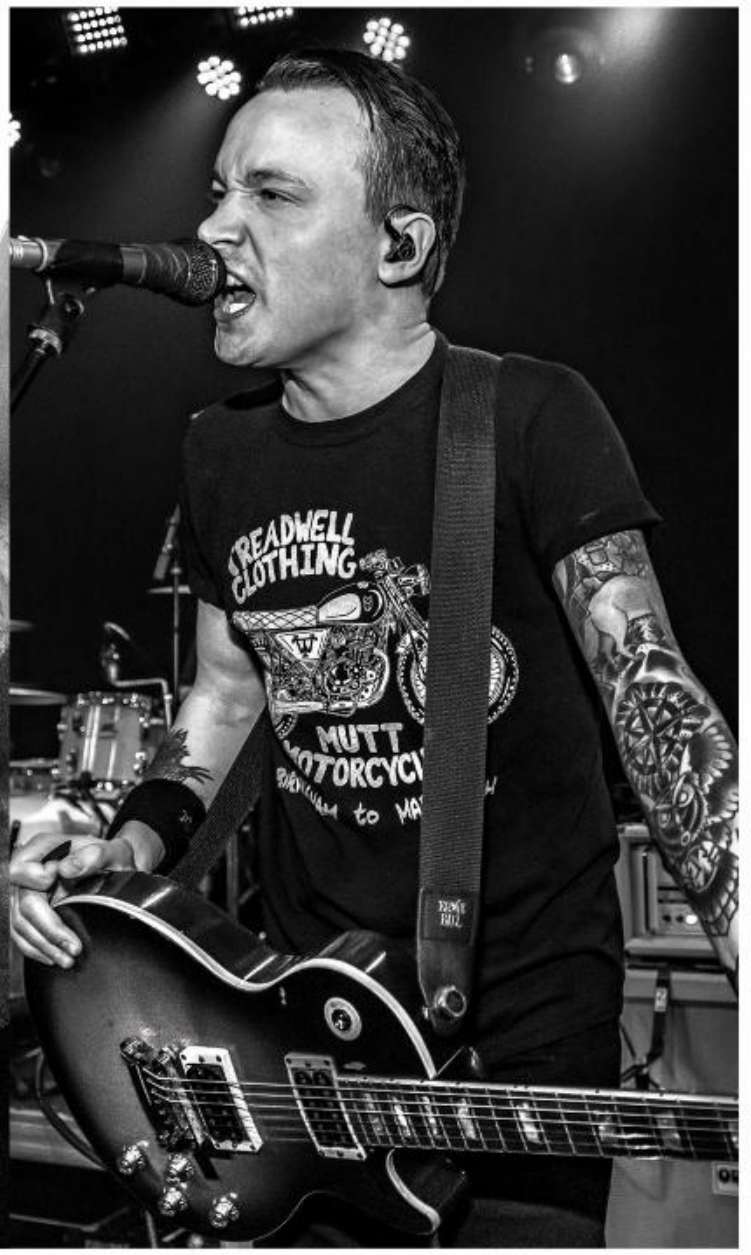
Elsewhere, Griffiths alters our perception of a classically bluesy, Kirk Hammett-style wah solo by shifting into the Indian Pantuvarali scale on Tiktaalika's title track ("Everyone knows the blues scale — just move it up a semi-tone from your root note and you get a whole new lease on life"). Vintage thrash is nevertheless baked into Griffiths' DNA — as evidenced when he drastically flips the fanciful optimism of an acoustic melody towards psyche-drilling trills and rapid-fire chugging on its opening "Prehistoric Prelude."

"I've always loved those kind of thrash albums that start with an acoustic intro, like Forbidden's *Twisted into Form* or *Master of Puppets*," Griffiths says, proudly adding of his contribution to the canon, "It starts all nice and pretty with the acoustic guitars, but of course that thrash riff has to slam in and take you by the throat."

"Everyone knows the blues scale — just move it up a semi-tone from your root note and you get a whole new lease on life"

ROSS JENNINGS

[*from left*] Hot Water Music's Chris Wollard, Chuck Ragan and Chris Cresswell



LEFT AND CENTER: ELENA VILAIN RIGHT: JOSH CASUCCIO

Hot Water Music

THE GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, PUNK ROCKERS ADD A THIRD GUITARIST ON THEIR LATEST ALBUM, *FEEL THE VOID*

By Jim Beaugez

"HOT WATER MUSIC is a very liberated band in the punk world," says Chris Cresswell, one of the long-running punk band's three guitarists and vocalists. "With punk being a genre, there's still a lot of rules, which is ironic. But Hot Water breaks them all the time."

Cresswell is speaking in the third person, but since 2017 he's been a full-fledged member of the Gainesville, Florida-based crew, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with co-guitarists and vocalists Chuck Ragan and Chris Wollard in addition to fronting his own band, The Flatliners. Hot Water Music's new ninth studio album, *Feel the Void* [*Equal Vision*], marks the first album they have written and recorded music as a quintet.

Over the course of their original six-album run before going on hiatus in 2004, Hot Water Music nearly became a genre unto itself. Their blend of wooly riffs, syncopated rhythms and growling vocals propelled long-players *No Division* [*Some; 1999*], *A Flight and a Crash* [*Epitaph; 2001*] and *Caution* [*Epitaph; 2003*] into the canon of post-hardcore essentials.

"With punk being a genre, there's still a lot of rules, which is ironic. But Hot Water breaks them all the time"
— CHRIS CRESSWELL

After reconvening in 2008, the band released a pair of solid albums, but something was missing. That ingredient, Wollard says, is the collaboration that defined their earlier work. In an about-face, the 12 songs on *Feel the Void* gestated for nearly a year as the band built, deconstructed and rebuilt them, then recorded them in Gainesville where it all started in the mid Nineties.

Tracked with an enviable cast of workhorse guitars and amps — Les Paul Customs and Juniors, Melody Makers and Telecasters cranked through a Marshall JCM800 (the "problem solver," notes Wollard), a Mesa Dual Rectifier, an Orange Rockerverb and a pair of custom Gosh-Sound heads — standouts "Killing Time," "Newtown Scraper" and "Lock Up" prove there's always room for more guitar, even in punk rock. And in the band's live sets, they cast aside even their own rules.

"We spend a lot of time writing and being really particular and careful with our note placement, but then you get on the road and you're like, 'Yeah, fuck all that,'" laughs Wollard. "There's been times when on the record there's no guitar solo, [*but*] from now on, there's a long fuckin' guitar solo here. And the band supports that. The band is built for that."

Ghalia Volt with a few of her favorite things

Ghalia Volt

FROM BUSKING IN BRUSSELS TO CREATING HER *ONE WOMAN BAND*, THIS SLIDE-RIPPING GUITARIST TAKES A FEARLESS APPROACH TO HER MUSIC

By Jim Beaugez

WHILE MANY BANDS sat out the entire Covid pandemic, Belgian blues guitarist Ghalia Volt had an out-of-the-box solution for traveling with a band when countries began to reopen: She simply became one herself.

Volt hit upon the idea of gigging solo after a spell playing bars on Frenchman Street in New Orleans. She would create percussion by stomping with her left foot and hitting a tambourine with her right foot, without skipping a note or slide lick on her guitar. It proved a liberating creative experiment that led to her 2021 album, *One Woman Band*.

"It becomes like a free-form kind of art," Volt says. "You work on your own time and rhythm — if you want to slow down, just because it feels good, you slow down and nobody's going to look at you. You want to rush a little bit because it feels better? You can do that, too. I just play whatever I want to play. It's got that real, authentic feel, like it's really just raw."

When it came time to take her solo show on the road, Volt would call ahead to each tour stop and arrange for percussion and a trio of guitar amplifiers while she traveled by train, then took a rideshare to the gigs. Her scrappy background in punk, garage rock and psychobilly — not to mention her days busking back home in Brussels — freed her to pursue music in her own way.

That streak carries over to her taste in gear and tones, as well. Volt is attracted to the gnarly, buzzing tones she gets from vintage gear like her 5-watt Fender Silvertone 1471 amp and her 1967 Old Kraftsman hollowbody guitar. You can hear the latter running straight through an Airline amp to get the deep, textured fuzz tone on *One Woman Band* standout "It Hurts Me Too."

"It's got that big, fat sound," she says. "It's so nasty — I love it. It's one-pickup tone and it's just like destroying everything."

Although Volt is working on her third full-band album for a tentative fall 2022 release — a project she describes as "pop-'issippi," a modern, more accessible take on Mississippi Hill Country blues with keys and varied percussion — she hasn't abandoned her one-woman show.

"Yeah, of course, I'm going to keep doing it," she says. "I think it's actually very entertaining, but I do miss the band performances, too. So I'll keep doing both."

"I just play whatever I want to play. It's got that real, authentic feel, like it's really just raw"

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** 1967 Old Kraftsman cutaway hollowbody, 1957 Framus, Gibson Les Paul Studio (for standard-tuning songs), cigar-box and license-plate guitars
- **AMPS** 5-watt Fender, Silvertone 1471

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JERRY CANTRELL

"WINO" LES PAUL CUSTOM

DARK WINE RED

Ghost — fronted (of course) by Tobias Forge — perform on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* in March

GUITAR WORLD

The Sixth Sense

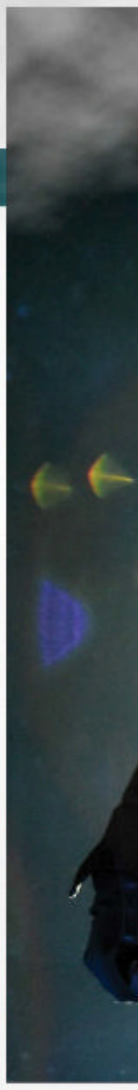
TOBIAS FORGE, MASTERMIND OF SWEDISH OCCULT ROCK SENSATION **GHOST**, TAKES *GW* DEEP INSIDE THE WRITING AND RECORDING PROCESS FOR THEIR MULTIPLE-CHART-TOPPING FIFTH ALBUM, *IMPERA*

BY AMIT SHARMA

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

JULY 2022

RANDY HOLMES/ABC VIA GETTY IMAGES



TOBIAS FORGE LIKES haunting people. You can hear it in his music — from Ghost's 2010 *Opus Eponymous* debut right through to this year's fifth full-length, *Impera*, there are all sorts of tritones and chromatic flavors purposefully employed to send shivers down the listener's spine. As the only official member of the band, working under a slightly different stage name for every album and supported by a revolving door of backing musicians known as the Nameless Ghouls, he's managed to elevate the group's name from relative obscurity in his native homeland of Sweden all the way through to top 10 charts and gargantuan arenas around the world. They now stand as the most successful rock band to emerge over the last decade or so — proving, without a shadow of a doubt, that the devil really does have all the best tunes.

"I find the tritone to be a very moody sound," Forge tells *Guitar World* a few hours before he's due to hit the stage and deliver one of the band's live rituals in character as Papa Emeritus IV. "Of course, that all goes back to Black Sabbath, though it also comes from my background playing death metal [*in early band Repugnant*]. We used to do it all the time, in every song and every riff. *Everything* was atonal and tritonal. I was very inspired by Slayer, Morbid Angel, Possessed and Necrophagia. I carried those influences with me into Ghost as well, because that's always been the way for me to express myself. The tritone makes me feel *good*... whether I'm hearing it or playing it!"

For album number five, Forge enlisted the talents of Opeth guitarist Fredrik Åkesson, who ended up performing all of the acoustic and electrics heard across its 12 mesmerizing tracks. He describes the Stockholm-based musician, who also played in Arch Enemy from 2005 to 2007 and occasionally collaborates with Europe guitarist John Norum, as an incredibly "diverse and multi-talented player" who can "do the blues and pretty much anything from this to that." That narrative is certainly evident across the new music, which features some of the most devilishly finger-twisting guitar work on any Ghost release to date.

"Fredrik's talent is so great he almost has talent *spasms*," Forge says with a laugh. "If you want him to shred a million notes an hour, he can do that. But with me, you have to dub that shit — maybe up to three times — so you really know what you're playing. I think he took it as a challenge, having to plan what he was doing note-by-note and not run in free flow. He was graceful enough to take direction in a way that a lot of players would have a problem with.

This album feels a lot more upbeat than the plague-ridden doom and gloom heard on its 2018 predecessor, *Prequelle*. Why is that?

I would agree. I think an important factor was my own sense of belonging, I guess. When we were making the last album I was really not in a good place in terms of my life. It was very altered at the time, but the world was actually more stable — at least compared to how it was during Impera. Now it's the complete opposite thing. My life is quite stable, with a sense of purpose and balance, but the world is in a *way* worse state than it was before. So that influenced the record. *Prequelle* was about the survival of the little person against a very threatening world, a place that could potentially annihilate the individual. This record is about society and the big factory or empire itself, and its suicidal mechanisms.

It also feels like your AOR and hair metal influences are more present than ever on this record.

I guess, though I'm not a fan of that scene in its entirety. Some people just love any band that had a rehearsal spot on the Sunset Strip, thinking that they're the shit, whereas I'm very limited to certain things. I love the first two Mötley Crüe records, as well as Guns N' Roses, W.A.S.P. and Van Halen, but then I can't stand most of the other things. A lot of it is just not my cup of tea at all. But, as you mention, I do love a lot of the grownup rock of the Seventies and Eighties, bands like Journey, Foreigner and Boston. The same goes for Def Leppard, even though people might associate them with the Sunset Strip because... well, a lot of strippers were dancing to "Pour Some Sugar on Me"! [*Laughs*] I like the important things: the big hi-fi, well-played rock music with a lot of harmony, which predates a lot of that Sunset Strip late-Eighties stuff.

"[OPETH'S FREDRIK ÅKESSON] WAS GRACEFUL ENOUGH TO TAKE DIRECTION IN A WAY THAT A LOT OF PLAYERS WOULD HAVE A PROBLEM WITH"

What exactly was the writing process for this record?

The way my setup works is that I have a home recording studio, but it's not at home! It's sort of ambulating. My recording gear, for most of 2020 and 2021, was whatever they had at a local studio complex in Stockholm, with all the typical modern stuff you'd expect to find, including that little corridor with six rooms coming off it. I was there during the writing phase. Then we moved into the bigger studio where we recorded the album. And I recently moved into another space for another project, so now it's all in a warehouse! When I come home after this tour, I'll have to set it all up again. That's just how it goes, going round and round until this album cycle is over — and we start demoing the next one.

Though you didn't play the solos yourself on this album, Ghost leads tend to be very modal and un-bluesy. Why do you think that is?

I guess that comes down to my approach to writing. I always preferred solos that weren't just shredding and more melodic solos, things that feel like an ad-lib or

excursion within the track. As a songwriter, I usually end up using melodies that didn't get used in the rest of the song as the solo. It might be an early vocal line that ends up becoming the guitar lead. And actually sometimes it's the other way round, I might write a solo that has this little bit that feels like it should be the chorus. If you try doing that with a real band, that does not fly at *all*... telling the bassist that actually you're giving their bit to the keyboard player! [*Laughs*] But as a songwriter who doesn't have to think about that too much, I can get away with it. "Griftwood" was a funny exercise — it was mapped out on keyboards by our producer Klas Åhlund, and then we had to make a dramatically slowed-down version for Fredrik to learn. It was quite hard because the timing changes happen in a really un-intuitive way. You would never compose a solo or improvise that way, but doing things like that to experiment can be really cool because it makes for special moments on the record.

What kind of guitars would we find in your home — for when ideas hit you and you're not in the studio?

At home, I have three guitars that are usually lying around. The main one that I've used most over the years is a black Gibson Flying V from 1978, back when they had the smaller, more rounded headstocks. It's a really cool guitar and very easy to play. I also have a late-Seventies Tobacco Burst Les Paul, which is pretty nice. And then I have a 1953 Goldtop that's fun to pick up and play, though it's not ergonomically quite as fast as the Flying V. I tend to find the Flying V the easiest one to play... with Les Pauls you need to sit down rather than stand up! I used to practice a lot. I don't practice much anymore, but I play about 10 times a day for five or 10 minutes.

So it's just little flickers of creativity every now and then?

Yeah! Every time I go by a guitar, I will pick it up and play a little before doing something else. My wife finds it super strange because it's so unfocused from her perspective. But that's how I do it. I might play a riff that I have in my head just to get it out. Sometimes I might hear a song on the radio or somewhere else and I'll map it out in my head. If I hear anything with a melody and chord structure, I can hear in my head what they're doing. I find it easy to pick out things. Then I have to double check later to see if I'm right and I'll figure it out thinking, "Oh it's *that* chord — now I see it. I learned something today!" And that goes into the bank of tricks. Stuff like that filters in more than sitting down and learning scales, which is to the detriment of my musical knowledge.

The guitar players in your band used to play Gibson RDs, before switching over to the Hagstrom Fantomen — which, of course, is the official Ghost signature model.

Aside from a few old-school heavy hitters that do the opposite, most bands use one set of practical guitars for live and then other things at home or in the studio. Unlike Tom Petty, most of us really don't want to carry around expensive guitars on tour! [*Laughs*] You don't want that sort of mileage on an old Fifties or Sixties guitar because they break. Being exposed to extreme cold and heat, plus a lot of wear and tear is not good. You have to draw a line somewhere. So what I use in the studio or whenever I'm writing is one thing and what you see live is something else. We keep quite a few guitars in the back for all the different tunings. You want them to be equal and function in exactly the same way, while at home the guitars I keep are very different. The 53 Goldtop has P-90 pickups, which sound nothing like my B.C. Rich with EMGs from the 1980s. They couldn't be more different.

On this tour, however, we couldn't help but notice one of the Nameless Ghouls holding a heavily modded Strat.

On this tour cycle we've explored a little, because we amped up and raised the bar when it came to soloing. There's some serious whammy bar action on this record. We came to the conclusion that we might need a more solo-oriented guitar, so it felt clear that we needed to change from what we were using before, which is our beloved Hagstrom, to a Strat with a lot of modifications — like a sustainer for that infinite ring. We are still using the Hagstrom on one side of the stage as there are two guitar players in the live band. GW

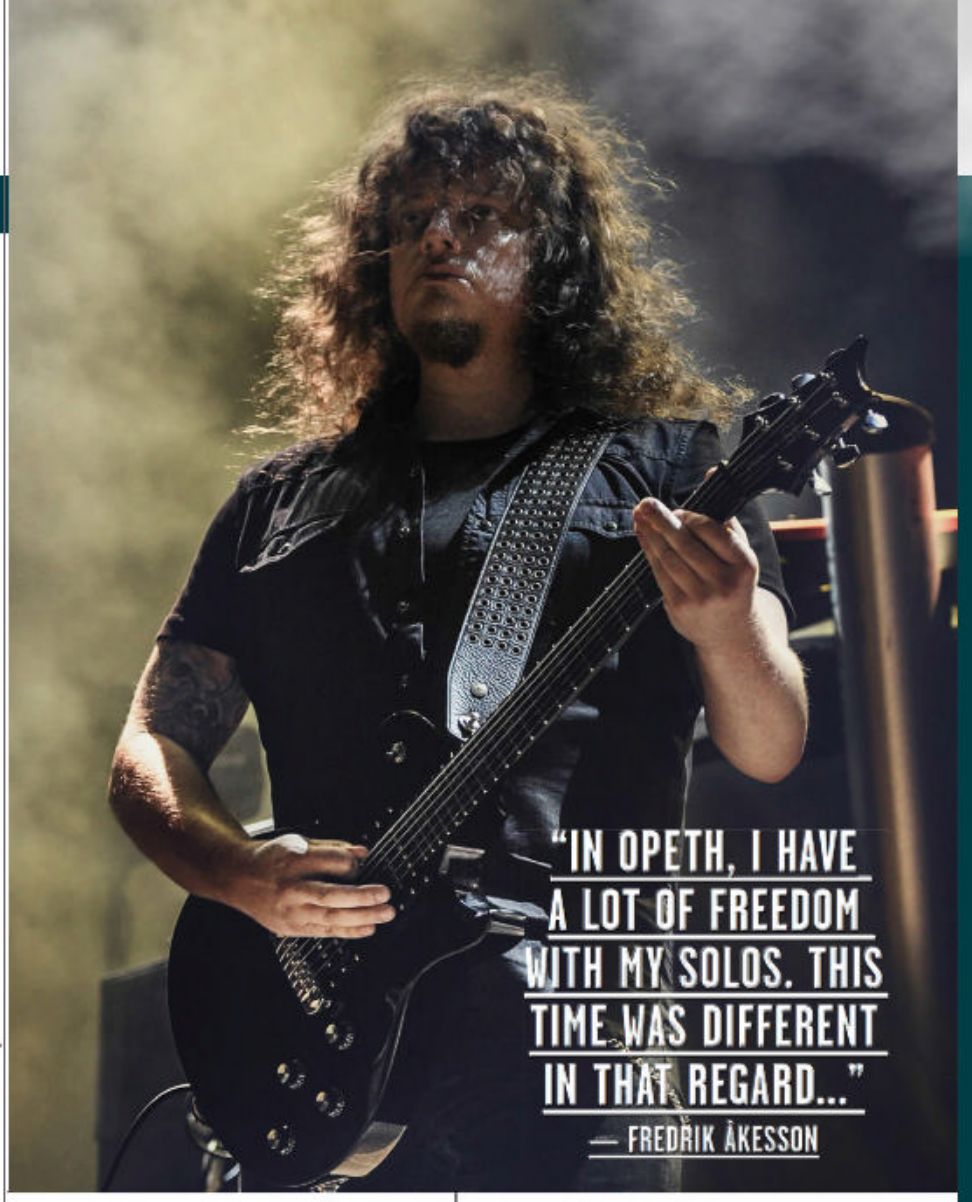
"UNLIKE TOM PETTY, MOST OF US REALLY DON'T WANT TO CARRY AROUND EXPENSIVE GUITARS ON TOUR!"

[*above*] Tobias Forge with a Strat-wielding Nameless Ghoul. "There's some serious whammy bar action on this record," Forge says

TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES

Åkesson the Axeman

HIRED GUN FREDRIK ÅKESSON TALKS US THROUGH HIS INVOLVEMENT ON GHOST'S *IMPERA* — AND THE GEAR USED TO DIAL IN HIS JAW-DROPPING TONES



When did the idea of collaborating with Ghost present itself?

I got this gig because me and Tobias are old friends. When Ghost covered "Enter Sandman" for *The Metallica Blacklist*, Tobias asked me to play the solos after he'd already done the rhythms. I went in and played a few things... it was less orchestrated and more open and bluesy. Then Tobias asked me to overdub the solo, and I was like, "Woah, I wish I knew that before!" because it's pretty difficult to overdub improvised stuff. You have to write your solos if you want to do that. So we ended up spending more hours in the studio... that all led to working together on this album.

What kind of instructions were you given?

Initially I was brought in to play a few leads on the album. Then I turned up to the studio with a bunch of amps with me, and Klas asked me if I played rhythm guitar. I explained to him that in Opeth, rhythm is what I'm playing 85 to 90 percent of the time, so sure... I guess I can play a few chords! And he said, "Perfect. You can do rhythm." Before that I'd only heard one song and it was the opening track, "Kaisarion," so I did the leads and rhythms for that. I guess they liked what they heard. It kinda developed into me doing all the rhythm guitars plus the acoustics. Both Klas and Tobias had very clear ideas about how to lay down the rhythms and orchestrate them. There were a lot of overdubs and sometimes 16 tracks at the same time, including ambient stuff and add-ons.

What can you tell us about the instruments used for the recordings?

We went through quite a few — like a vintage Strat from '85, Tobias' Seventies Strat and a 1970 Strat I actually bought from John Norum. You can hear Tobias' Strat on "Call Me Little Sunshine." And then for humbucker guitars, we had a Flying V, a Les Paul and an Explorer. On top of that, there were a lot of single-string parts with an octave, so I used my old ESP Eclipse with EMG pickups. And there was some PRS in there too. For the acoustic stuff we used my PRS Angelus, as well as my red Custom 24 for the leads on "Kaisarion" and "Twenties." This album has a lot of Brian May-style overdubs, with four-piece harmonies dubbed three times each as well as the octaves. I've never recorded so many layers of guitar... It was fun, almost like a Mutt Lange and Def Leppard kind of production experience!

And how about amps and pedals?

I brought in my Olsson 100-watt Little Hill, which is my signature prototype that was used on the last Opeth album, *In Cauda Venenum*. I originally worked with designer John Olsson on the 20-watt version, which is already available, and this is the higher-powered head. It's a very muscular-sounding amplifier with a lot of influence from Eddie Van Halen's "brown sound," as well as modern metal crunch. Then there was my Friedman BE-100, some late-Fifties Marshall Plexis and Tobias' Mesa/Boogie Mark IIC+, which is the same kind of 1x12 combo famously used on Metallica's *Master of Puppets*, with a MLC Vanilla Sky pedal in front. The other main pedals were the MXR Sugar Drive, which has a Klon-style circuit, and an old DOD Preamp 250 from the Seventies, like what Yngwie Malmsteen used with his Plexis back in the day on those early albums.

Which solos are you most proud of?

"Griftwood" came out great, which is the one Klas originally programmed it into a sequencer on his computer with a synthetic guitar sound. It starts off on the backbeat and the 16th note triplets switch to 32 note triplets at points, which gives this feeling of speeding up in bursts. It's important to get those kinds of licks really tight on the beat, so you get the percussive feel of ultimately what's a sequence kind of lick. I had to bring that home and work on it — being given two versions, one at 80 bpm and another at full speed. It all happened pretty fast, so I had to work on it for a day or so to get it tight! I also really like the melodic leads in "Respite on the Spitalfields," which I played on my Seventies Strat. The first solo in "Twenties" is really cool too, with lots of evil tones in it.

How different did it feel, compared to your lead work in Opeth?

Usually in Opeth, I have a lot of freedom with my solos. This time was different in that regard, and it was a fun challenge to try and fulfill someone else's vision. It didn't bother me... I actually found it kinda interesting. It felt like session work — because it very much was.

— Amit Sharma

COURTESY OF FREDRIK ÅKESSON

INSPIRATION UNLEASHED

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Randy Rhoads at the Oakland Coliseum with his 1974 Gibson Les Paul Custom, July 4, 1981

RHOADS SCHOLARS

AN ALL-STAR PANEL OF SIX-STRING SUPERSTARS — INCLUDING DAVE MUSTAINE, KIAK HAMMETT, ZAKK WYLDE, NITA STRAUSS, MARK MORTON, TOM MORELLO, DOUG ALDRICH AND MANY MORE — EXPLAIN WHY RANDY RHOADS IS STILL SO RELEVANT 40 YEARS AFTER HIS TRAGIC DEATH

BY NICK BOWCOTT

LARRY HULST/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

THE "CHIP PAN" PEDALBOARD	MAX NORMAN TELLS ALL	RANDY'S METAL MACHINE	THE SAGA OF RANDY'S RR3	AND RANDY'S BEST SOLO IS...	HOW TO PLAY LIKE RANDY
42	44	46	47	48	52

Jackson

STAGGERING AS IT may seem, it was 40 years ago that a heart-wrenching tragedy claimed one of rock's finest guitarists. His name? Randy Rhoads, Ozzy Osbourne's brilliant guitarist, who was killed in a plane crash in Leesburg, Florida, on March 19, 1982, at age 25. In the space of a mere two studio albums with Ozzy (and two with Quiet Riot), this diminutive man with a giant talent made a massive, indelible impact on rock that was immediate and profound. Rhoads was a rarity; he was a game-changer in the truest sense of the term. The fact that four decades later his breathtaking riffs, licks, solos and compositions continue to inspire new generations of rock guitarists speaks volumes as to the enormity of his influence.

I've written numerous articles about Rhoads over the past four decades — and I was fortunate enough to meet him in the U.K. in 1981. What was he like, you ask? Humble and charming. I also got to work with Randy's family on the Marshall 1959RR Randy Rhoads Signature Super Lead 100W Head (2007) and the Jackson Limited Edition Randy Rhoads Tribute Concorde (2010). I don't mind admitting that being able to hold Randy's legendary Concorde guitar as his dear mother, Delores (Dee), taught at her music school in 2009 was, without doubt, a priceless highlight of my life.

I could easily wax lyrical for several pages about Rhoads' talent. Instead, I'm gonna turn things over to the likes of Zakk Wylde, Kirk Hammett, Nita Strauss, Rudy Sarzo, Tom Morello, Ozzy producer Max Norman, Dave Mustaine, Paul Gilbert, George Lynch, John 5 and many more talented guitarists, as their insightful words are far more interesting than mine.

The question I put to all of them was a simple one. Well, simple to ask, but not necessarily simple to answer: Why — after recording only two studio albums with Ozzy Osbourne — has Rhoads managed to stay relevant and influential a whopping 40 years after his tragic death?

TOM MORELLO: I think Randy's small body of work just speaks for itself. The limited videos we have of Randy playing are transcendent. Anyone who picks up a guitar with ambitions of playing rock 'n' roll — now until forever — is going to be blown away by those Ozzy records and those short video clips. I first heard Randy on a Chicago radio station [*that was*] debuting "Crazy Train." I was in the car with friends; I told them all to shut up because I could tell something incredible was coming through the speakers. From the opening riff to the solo, I had no idea what was going on, but I knew I had to find out! I didn't pick up the guitar until about a year and a half after hearing Randy, but I had a Randy poster on my wall when I was practicing eight hours a day. The fact that he was a musician first and a rock star second very much appealed to me. I wanted to dedicate myself to the art and craft of playing guitar, and Randy was a huge inspiration in that regard.*

My son Roman, who's 10, and my oldest son, Rhoads (who I named after Randy), continue to be in awe of what a special musician he was.

(***Editor's Note**: *Tom is such a huge Randy fan that he lobbied — for many years — the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame to induct the late, great guitarist. Morello's efforts finally paid off in 2021. Morello gave the inductance speech — with some reverently enthusiastic help from Messrs. Hammett and Wylde. Speaking of whom...*)

KIRK HAMMETT (METALLICA): Randy was more than just a guitar player. He was a lion! He represented the hardworking musician whose dedication to his instrument brought him all the success he deserved without compromising his attitude and vision via his riffs, songs, solos and tone. He also laid down the blueprint that shows us how to follow our own vision as well.

ZAKK WYLDE (BLS, OZZY): We're still talking about Randy today because of his compositions. The reason the music of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart is still being listened to and played at places like the Hollywood Bowl is because of what they wrote, not because it was fast or flashy. That's why people are still talking about them hundreds of years later. Randy's relevance is the same as Bach's, Beethoven's or Mozart's. It's just a timeless thing — because it's good. [*Laughs*] Just like the Eagles, Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, there's no "best before date." It's timeless. And it's pretty mind-blowing that Randy was so young and creating such incredibly mature stuff. God bless him.

If he'd never passed away and just quit rock music [*instead*], the impact of those two Ozzy records would be just as devastating. We'd still be celebrating them today, saying, "Oh man, I hope Randy goes back to playing heavy again one day." I think those two albums were like a blueprint, just like when Henry Ford built the first car and now all cars are derivatives of that car. Between Eddie and Randy, there was a changing of the guard. You had pointy guitars, guitars with paint jobs — like stripes and polka-dots, all types of stuff. It was a new culture; a new breed of player, and Randy was at the forefront.

RICHIE FAULKNER (JUDAS PRIEST): There's a lot to learn from Mr. Rhoads, whatever generation you're from. From his classically infused, unorthodox scales and note choices to the balls-out catchy, heavy-rock riffs and fantastic songwriting, he'll never fail to inspire. Randy was and still is a pioneer of heavy rock guitar, and I think he will continue to be an inspiration and an influence to generations of guitarists for many years to come.

PHIL X (BON JOVI, THE DRILLS): The main reason guitar players stay inspirational and relevant for decades is that they stand out from the herd. Why do you think kids start playing guitar and want to learn "Crazy Train"? It's got teeth. From the tone to the licks to the solo, it's unbridled energy ripping into your face with a guitar. That's infectious and powerful. That's Randy Rhoads.

PAUL GILBERT: He brought a classical influence and heavy metal guitar together in a really melodic way. He would include elements that were musically sophisticated and daring. He also rocked, and he never sounded too "prog." If that's not enough, he wrote "Crazy Train"! What a riff! Every guitar player wants to get their fingers into that

Rhoads with the Concorde, the custom, asymmetrical guitar he helped design — and the first guitar to bear the name "Jackson" on the headstock. For more about the Jackson Rhoads (in all its many forms), check out pages 46 and 47.

ROSS HALFIN

one. And that's just the simple one. Long live Randy!

MAX NORMAN (PRODUCER, *BLIZZARD OF OZZ*, *DIARY OF A MADMAN* AND *TRIBUTE*): Randy was an old-school player who had the ability to balance taste, speed, agility and feel to create something better than 100 percent. There's a lot of expression and a lot of emotion in his playing, and those qualities are essential because they make all the difference. That's why someone else could play the exact same thing and it would sound totally different — like something is missing. Randy had the musicality inside him that would enable him to play these things correctly and drag you into them. He always played with enthusiasm and a sense of occasion, tact and fire. He never phoned it in.

Randy just seems to leapfrog the generations. People hear him and realize he's a truly great guitar player as opposed to just a technical monstrosity — and that's what sets him apart from a lot of the modern players. There's a million YouTube players who are astonishingly technically good, but they leave me cold. I look at them and go, "How lovely and fast you are!" Randy wasn't interested in how fast it was. He'd play slow if he felt that's the right place to go; he knew when to leave holes and gaps, when to have a long note, when to have a short note. He didn't over play. He played with taste and musicality. That's what music is about; otherwise it's not really music, it's just some form of exercise. It might be impressively hyper-accurate, but it leaves me cold.

NITA STRAUSS (ALICE COOPER, SOLO): Randy was not afraid to meld different genres and playing styles. He also processed some incredible shredding techniques but realized it wasn't lame to do a beautiful acoustic piece as well. He was fearlessly, unapologetically and joyfully himself as an artist. I think that's something to look up to, and also something that will never get old.

ALEX SKOLNICK (TESTAMENT): Randy seemed like someone who was very genuine as a person and devoted as a musician. He was a refreshing break from the type who'd destroy hotel rooms and engage in other anti-social behavior. He studied with classical guitar teachers while on tour and planned to eventually return to school to study music at a higher level. He was the catalyst for my own decision to become a university-educated musician — although it was jazz in my case. He brought to heavy metal a much-needed dose of class and dignity, despite being in a band with Ozzy, someone who was as famous for his shock-

LICK LESSONS WITH GEORGE LYNCH

MR. SCARY'S TALE OF SUBBING FOR RANDY RHOADS AT MUSONIA

WHEN IT COMES to shredders who emerged on L.A.'s Sunset Strip in the Eighties, few are more respected or revered than George "Mr. Scary" Lynch of Dokken and Lynch Mob fame. As it turns out, one of George's fans was none other than the late great, Randy Rhoads. And, as a result, when Randy landed the coveted Ozzy Osbourne gig in late 1979, his first choice for filling in his busy teaching position at his mother's music school, Musonia, was George.

"Randy used to bring his mom, Delores, down to see me play shows in L.A. and told her some very nice things about my playing," Lynch says. "I was very flattered by that."

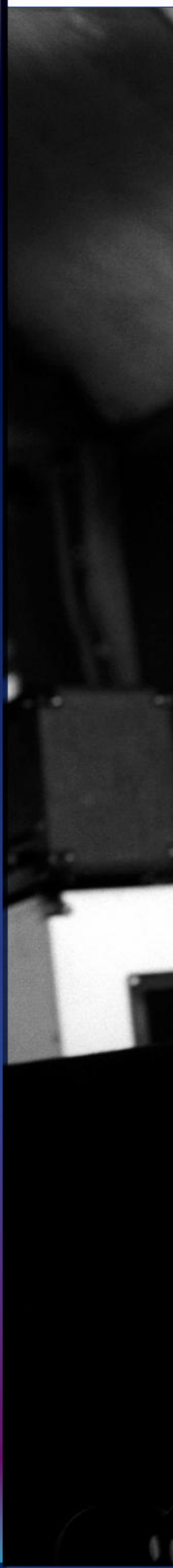
Ironically, George was also one of the front-runners for Ozzy's guitarist gig. "It was one of those classic good news, bad news stories," Lynch says with a laugh. "The bad news is Randy got the Ozzy gig. You didn't. The good news is, you're going to sub for him at Musonia!

"It was an honor to take his teaching spot, and I worked really hard to make sure I was up to the challenge, because I didn't want to disappoint anybody. I knew I had an uphill battle because I'm not a schooled player like Randy was. I didn't know anything about music theory, could barely read notation and didn't know scales or modes. So I had to develop a language with my students so we could communicate, which was quite a challenge. It wasn't just showing them a lick or run; I had to explain how I looked at the fretboard and came up with things.

"It was definitely a wonderful experience, especially for selfish reasons. Because I was in the saddle for many hours a day, I'd be practicing and forcing myself to learn new stuff so I'd have things to teach people. As a result, I became a much better player — I don't know about my students, but hopefully they did too! What was funny — and I've told this story before, actually — is that a lot of his students were attractive girls who were there just to look at Randy because he was a handsome guy, I guess. They'd show up for their first lesson with me, look really disappointed and then I'd never see them again! My best student was Brent Woods. He worked really hard and he now plays with Sebastian Bach. I'm very proud of that.

"I didn't last very long, though — maybe six months," Lynch says. "I was making good money building guitars on the side. I'd slap together necks, bodies and parts and then I'd sell them to my students for, like, 350 or 400 bucks. They'd get these Charvel bodies and Mighty Mite necks with cool pickups; it was a pretty good deal. Delores got hip to the fact I was doing this, though, and I guess she didn't like it! [*Laughs*] One particular day I had two students in my teaching room and instead of doing lessons, I was selling them guitars. She got wind of it and literally kicked the door open when the money and guitars were changing hands. She was not happy because I was doing non-teaching business on her premises! Delores made a new rule, and I wasn't allowed to keep the door closed after that — I had to keep it open."

Despite that little hiccup and his moving on, Mrs. Rhoads still held Lynch in high regard. "Delores did something really nice for me in the early 2000s," Lynch says. "She gifted me one of Randy's classical acoustic guitars when I visited her at Musonia. I went there to do an interview in the room I used to give lessons in, which was Randy's old teaching room. His little Fender combo amp I used to play through was still there, and I offered to buy it and the MXR Distortion+ pedal because they sounded great together. I would have put them to good use, but understandably Delores didn't want to let them go." — *Nick Bowcott*



[*facing page*] George Lynch in San Francisco with Don Dokken in 1983

[*this page*] Rhoads tunes his Sandoval V at Ridge Farm Studio in 1980

> "THE BAD NEWS IS RANDY GOT THE OZZY GIG. YOU DIDN'T. THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU'RE GOING TO SUB FOR HIM AT MUSONIA!"
>
> GEORGE LYNCH

ing behavior off-stage as for his voice onstage. Most importantly, he raised the level of guitar playing in hard rock to a new standard. He was one of those rare artists who helped turn the page to the next chapter. With very few exceptions — EVH most notably — he was someone who represented where rock guitar had been, where it was at the moment and where it was headed. And he did so without any gimmicks, bells or whistles, just pure artistry.

The music Randy made with Ozzy on the two studio albums, as well as *Tribute* and any other live recordings, changed the game completely. Even though he was just hitting his stride, the few recordings that exist were enough to make him one the giants of electric guitar, then and now. He managed to find his own modern tone and two-handed techniques, building off what EVH had popularized, but without sounding like an imitator. He did this while presenting a deep knowledge of classical guitar and composition that was extremely rare in rock. Had he continued and pursued his studies, one can only imagine the heights he might have reached. While he may not have been the first to merge hard rock and classical ideas, Randy was able to capture the baroque moods of centuries past with a searing tone that sounded straight from the future. In other words, Randy Rhoads was timeless.

COURTNEY COX (THE IRON MAIDENS): The music business is probably one of the most stressful, soul-crushing, anxiety-filled careers one can go into, but you have people like Randy who entirely enjoyed his craft and lived it. The one solid thing about music is that it doesn't lie. With my current time on this earth, only certain players stick out because of the passion that bleeds from them. Anyone can play guitar or any instrument, but it takes a certain soul to live it as Randy did in his years, and still does in those songs. He may be gone physically, but he lives on every time you put those albums on. He is with us always.

PHIL DEMMEL (VIO-LENCE): It's a multitude of things. My first concert ever was the 1981 "Day on the Green" show in Oakland. Ozzy came on at 10 a.m., and Randy played with such conviction that you believed and felt every note he played. There are very few artists who can convey that to me, especially at the impressionable age of 14. He was super concise, and you felt these genuine emotions coming from him. That's what I wanted to do — to have that conviction. Honesty is a big deal with me, so being able to feel that from him was really special.

Plus, this dude was hunting down teach-

THIS PAGE: FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS FACING PAGE: RANDY BACHMAN/GETTY IMAGES

ers on his days off, because he wanted to go learn! He was always looking to be better; he had this drive — and people are drawn to that kind of dedication because they want it too. I think all of this, along with the dramatically tragic way in which he left us so young, melds into his deserved, legendary, timeless status. And it's not a myth. It's real — it happened.

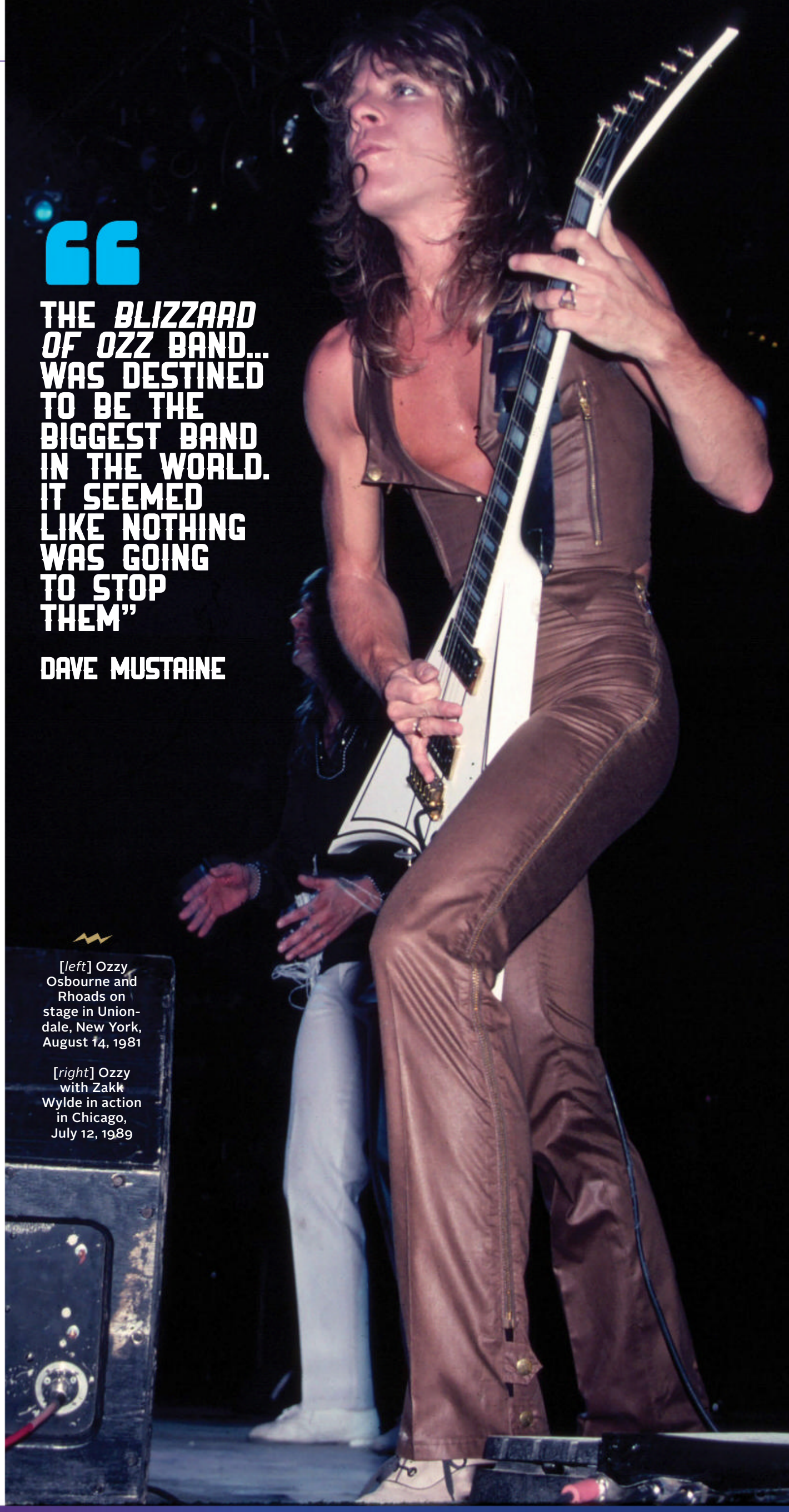
JARED JAMES NICHOLS: The humanity in his playing is inspiring on so many levels. Tone, touch, precision — Randy had it all. When I hear him play, I hear his personality, I hear excitement. You can tell he is fully into it. Not only did he have monster chops and endless songwriting talent; he made you feel happy when he played. Every solo is like a rollercoaster.

Players of all skills and styles can draw from Randy's musicality and find inspiration. Whether you're just starting out and want to learn riffs or you're trying to break out of a rut using some of his improvisation techniques; or are looking to incorporate different genres into your style; Randy and his playing are timeless.

RUDY SARZO: The purity of his playing and compositions. And, of course, Randy's passion and creativity. For those reasons, people will still be talking about him 100 years from now. He is a life-changing experience. I always find something new and interesting every time I listen to those Ozzy records, even now. As a matter of fact, I've been listening to *Tribute* a lot lately, and I'm like, "Wow!" He played with so much fire, finesse and articulation. There's no bum notes, no mistakes. And that was just another night of Randy playing live with Ozzy. The only difference was, every night he was better than the night before. That said, the consistency of the quality of his playing remained the same from night to night.

DAVE MUSTAINE (MEGADETH): You are either a follower or you are not. Randy was not. He was an innovator, a creator, and [*the*] *Blizzard of Ozz* band was not another cheap knock-off of a popular band. They were destined to be the biggest band in the world. It seemed like nothing was going to stop them. That was until the fateful date when tragedy struck.

MARK MORTON (LAMB OF GOD): When Randy passed at 25 years old, he was just getting started. He was cut short. Yet in that short time he very much defined what the modern heavy metal guitar player's role would be — as a songwriter, a solo-



"THE *BLIZZARD OF OZZ* BAND... WAS DESTINED TO BE THE BIGGEST BAND IN THE WORLD. IT SEEMED LIKE NOTHING WAS GOING TO STOP THEM"

DAVE MUSTAINE

[*left*] Ozzy Osbourne and Rhoads on stage in Uniondale, New York, August 14, 1981

[*right*] Ozzy with Zakk Wylde in action in Chicago, July 12, 1989

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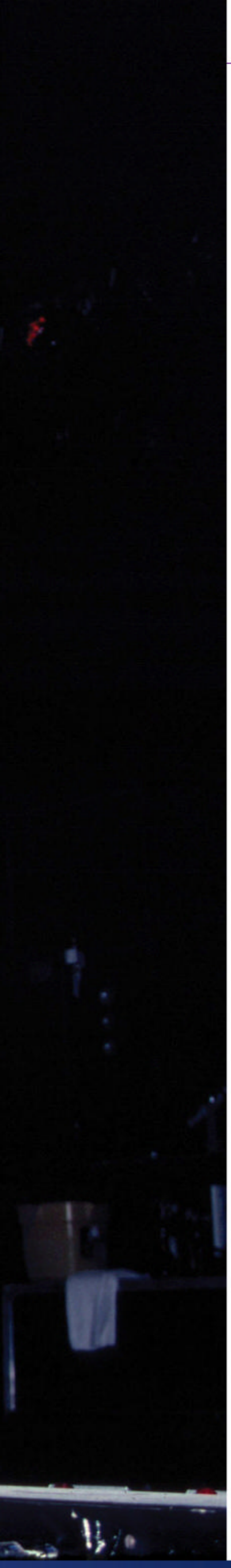

ist, the importance of the riff, his presence on stage, the angular guitars, his cool look. All that stuff had a lasting impact, and it's been captured in time forever. And then, we could just talk about "Crazy Train"! We've all heard it a million times, and that riff is probably one of the first that comes to mind when you think of a metal riff. It has the same relevance as "Smoke on the Water" — it's *the* metal riff. The legacy of that alone is eternal, and he was very young when he wrote it. That's why I think he's still so relevant and still so captivating, both as a player and as a person.

GEORGE LYNCH: Putting Randy with Ozzy allowed him to live up to his full potential, which was incredibly deep. Also, a lot of what Randy did was classically based, and classical music is timeless; it's eons old — it's not a fad! Those changes, those scales and everything else he used so well are just wonderful ways of translating human emotions that work over time, irrespective of the particular culture or particular era. It's this transcendent way of communicating — and, just like the blues, none of those things are going away. Now Eighties music, on the other hand... [*Laughs*]

DOUG ALDRICH (THE DEAD DAISIES): It's because nobody plays like Randy. He was very unique in the way he played and composed. The two albums with Ozzy are masterpieces, and he made the most of every moment on both. There are many great players who were influenced by him, but there's only one Randy — that's it, man. People are going to continue to be inspired by him in the same way they're inspired by Hendrix and all the other greats who've passed on. We've all missed out on 40 years of whatever Randy would have created, and you can't help but wonder what he would have done as he was still rising. But, as we can't get any more music from Randy, let's really dig deep and figure out how he did what he did, and why it is so great.

JOHN 5 (ROB ZOMBIE, JOHN 5 AND THE CREATURES): People will still be talking about Randy Rhoads on the 100th anniversary of his passing. That's just how it is; it's never going to go away because it's incredibly rare to have someone who is so very, very special — like a Jimi Hendrix, an Eddie Van Halen... or a Randy Rhoads. They have an energy people gravitate toward. You can count rare talents like Randy on one hand, and what makes them so special is almost impossible to describe. It's like trying to describe a color. You can't really do it. And that's what we're trying to do here! GW

ZAKK WYLDE ON PLAYING RANDY RHOADS' SONGS AND SOLOS ON STAGE WITH OZZY

ZAKK WYLDE HAS always worn his heart and influences unashamedly on his sleeve. And when it comes to the man he reverently refers to as "Saint Rhoads," he's not only a huge fan but a disciple in the truest sense of the word. As is now the stuff of rock legend, Zakk joined Ozzy Osbourne in 1987 as an unknown teenage guitarist from New Jersey. Then, after the writing and recording of Ozzy's *No Rest for the Wicked,* he was thrown into the spotlight, performing on arena stages all over the world. In addition to Ozzy's new songs, the set list obviously included many Randy Rhoads crowd favorites. No pressure whatsoever!

How did the young guitarist handle walking out on an arena stage with Ozzy for the first time, knowing he was going to play "Crazy Train," "I Don't Know," "Mr. Crowley" and "Flying High Again" to thousands of rabid fans? "Aside from the pressure of playing them, because I obviously wanted to play each of his solos as spot-on as I possibly can, the added pressure was having the bullseye on my Les Paul," Zakk says. "As Oz said, 'If you clam out on any of these songs or solos, they know where to aim the tomatoes and vegetables!'"

Speaking of pressure, Zakk's first-ever live show with Ozzy was a veritable "trial by fire." His debut was to the inmates of Wormwood Scrubs Prison, England, in 1987. "The boss [*Ozzy*] told me this," Wylde says with roaring laughter. "'Zakk, you're the closest thing to Pamela Anderson these guys are probably ever gonna see! So you'd better not mess up. 'Cause, if you do, I'm leaving you here, man!'" Thankfully the young guitarist played the proverbial blinder and earned his "get out of jail free" card.

— *Nick Bowcott*

You can clearly see Rhoads' "chip pan" pedalboard on stage at Ozzy's "Day on the Green" show in Oakland, July 1981

RANDY'S FAMOUS "CHIP PAN" PEDALBOARD

WHAT WAS REALLY UNDER THE HOOD?

By Nick Bowcott

IN ADDITION TO his synonymous pair of 100-watt, Marshall stacks and his Jackson, Gibson and Sandoval axes, another vital component in Randy Rhoads' signal chain was the large pedalboard he used on stage and in the studio. This big black behemoth was custom-made, housed in a flight case and boasted no fewer than eight switches and nine control knobs. Ozzy Osbourne nicknamed it the "chip pan" because it was so darned noisy! [*Editor's note: "Chip" is a common U.K. term for french fry.*] The $64,000 question, however, is: Were the stompboxes under the hood of Randy's "chip pan" totally stock, or were they modded in some way? Read on and all will be revealed... or will it?

On Monday, October 13, 1980, at Malvern Winter Gardens, England, I was fortunate enough to watch Randy play on Ozzy's first U.K. tour. To say I was blown away by what I saw that night would be a massive understatement; I knew I was watching a man destined to become a legend.

The opening band was the criminally underrated and oft-overlooked Welsh power trio, Budgie. Shortly thereafter, I became good friends with Budgie's guitarist, "Big" John (JT) Thomas (now sadly deceased — RIP, mate). As John and Randy became really close on that tour, I learned a lot about Rhoads, both as a musician and as a man, from JT.

One of the many fascinating things John shared with me concerned Randy's now-mystical pedalboard. "It started acting up after a roadie dropped the bloody thing," John recalled when I interviewed him several years later. "All the techs had looked at the board and drawn a blank, so Randy and I decided to give it a go ourselves." Before they started "tinkering," though, the pair sensibly decided to get duplicates of all six pedals used: namely the Roland Volume and Dunlop Cry Baby wah pedals that flanked the board; plus the MXR Distortion+, MXR 10-band Graphic EQ, MXR Flanger and MXR Stereo Chorus that lurked under its hood. However, to their complete bewilderment, when the two friends hooked up their newly purchased pedals in the same exact order, "They sounded nothing like Randy's pedalboard."

[*Tone geek note: Randy often used a delay unit too, but it wasn't on his pedalboard; it was at the end of the signal chain, just before his Marshall amps. It was invariably one of two tape delays: a Roland RE-201 Space Echo or a Korg SE-500 Stage Echo.*]

Randy with Budgie guitarist "Big" John (JT) Thomas at JT's home in Birmingham, England, 1980

"So we started taking his board apart and discovered that the circuitry inside it had been set in some sort of resin," John continued. "There was nothing more we could do. Maybe his pedals had been modified, or maybe there were some line boosters or filters added, which could've explained the difference too; there was no bleedin' way we could know!"

Granted, "potting" electronics in epoxy resin is often done to protect components from moisture and vibration. It also can improve insulation, thus reducing interference, too. That said, it is *also* sometimes done to hide a circuit and/or component secret or three! Intriguing stuff, as Randy's pedalboard — especially his use of the MXR Distortion+ and MXR 10-band Graphic EQ units — definitely lurks at the very heart of his highly revered guitar tone. Yes, the plot thickens.... GW

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TRIPLE THREAT: RECORDING RANDY'S SOLOS

RENOWNED PRODUCER MAX NORMAN RECALLS RECORDING RANDY'S REMARKABLE LEAD WORK

By Nick Bowcott

IN THE WORLD of hard rock and heavy metal, English producer/engineer Max Norman needs no introduction — his impressive discography speaks for itself. From Megadeth's *Countdown to Extinction* to Ozzy Osbourne's *Blizzard of Ozz, Diary of a Madman* and *Tribute*, when it comes to metal, Max clearly has a Midas touch. We asked the esteemed producer about the recording of Randy's timeless solos on those now legendary first two Ozzy studio albums.

One of the things that truly stands out about Randy's lead work on both studio albums is the passion and fire that each and every guitar solo exudes. How was that often-elusive "magic" so successfully captured?

There was a definite sense of occasion when it came time for Randy to record those main, middle-of-the-song solos. The way we did them was this: While Randy was rehearsing to record a particular solo, we didn't sit around and listen to him; instead, we'd go up to the local pub for a few beers or whatever. Then I'd go back, and he'd say, "OK, I'm ready to take it!" You could see it in his face on the studio floor; he was steeling himself... getting ready to pounce. There was a palpable "Now we're recording" sense of excitement and momentum building up. Randy wanted to capture a performance, and he'd attempt to get the solo within the first two or three takes in its entirety. If he didn't, he'd say, "Go away for another hour and then come back — I'm not quite getting it right now." But, for the most part, he would successfully record the whole solo to his liking in those first two or three takes. Randy was such a well-prepared and disciplined guy, he obviously wouldn't say he was ready until he felt he really was. As a result, we'd grab each solo very quickly and it would be a very fresh, whole take.

Randy had a very clear vision of what he wanted to achieve. To this end, he'd often play what most people would consider to be a perfect take and say, "No, that doesn't feel quite right — let's redo it." Other times he'd say something like, "Goddamn, that felt really good, but I didn't catch the harmonic I wanted on one note, and it's got to be there." I'd look at him in astonishment, thinking, "Are we really gonna blow off this great take and record over it?" He'd say, "I've got this," and then, sure enough, he'd play it again and nail that missing harmonic perfectly! Randy's incredible attention to detail, plus his wonderful combination of technique, feel, fire and musicality all still leap out and draw you in, even now, some 40 years later — that's what makes him so unique. It's astonishing to me that it's been over 41 years since we did those records.

[*from left*] Rhoads, producer Max Norman and bassist Bob Daisley in the control room at Ridge Farm Studio

Randy's ability to double solos has long been "the stuff of legend." That said, I distinctly remember you telling me once that he actually tripled his solos.

Yeah, if I remember correctly, all those main solos were triple tracked. I might well be proven wrong, though, as there are students out there who even can tell you what color shoes I was wearing on a certain day back then! [*Laughs*] Anyway, like I just told you, the main solo was the end-result of a single performance. Then, once Randy had laid down the exact solo he wanted, he'd say, "OK, let me put a double on it," and we'd do another two. Obviously, we kept the first one in the middle, and panned the other two left and right while pushing them back by a few dBs, just to give the solo its overall tone.

That said, on both those records, the outro solos are invariably ones that Randy just ripped out at the time. They were first takes with no rehearsal involved. They were done that way because we either didn't have enough time, or because Ozzy said, "Keep that one." That's another way of capturing the freshness, attack and the ferociousness of Randy's playing. You can really hear it coming out too.

You have to remember that in those days, when you hit "Record," it was a very finite thing, because we only had 24 tracks in total, and one was used for time code! As a result, we didn't have the modern-day luxury of being able to say, "Yeah, keep that one, let's do another 50!" It was either, "Yeah, that's good, we're keeping it" or "That's not happening, let's record over it."

Also, back then records were made very quickly, often in just three or four weeks. You didn't have time to fuck around; you had to make decisions on the spot and then live with them because there wasn't an "undo" button. You didn't get bogged down like people do nowadays by spending days, weeks or even months on a solo, a bass part or whatever. You just went with your gut and moved on!

How "exact" was Randy's doubling?

I'm sure you know as well as I do that doing an exact double doesn't help; it's the differences between the two that ultimately makes them work together... or not! So once we had the main solo in the can, we weren't listening for the accuracy of his doubling. Instead we'd be listening for the interaction between the tracks. The unique movement the double gives the original when it's mixed as a ghost behind it — the way certain notes flange, the way they hit together. We were listening for the resulting texture and the uniqueness the double adds to the main take. It was all about the sum of the whole, rather than just the separate parts. GW

THIS PAGE: KINDLY SUPPLIED BY BOB DAISLEY FACING PAGE: COURTESY OF RUDY SARZO (ALSO KINDLY!)

TOTAL RECALL: RANDY'S PIVOT POINTS

RUDY SARZO DISCUSSES PIVOTAL MOMENTS IN THE METAMORPHOSIS OF HIS DEAR FRIEND, RANDY RHOADS

By Nick Bowcott

RUDY SARZO'S BASS-playing resume is as remarkable as it is impressive. Quiet Riot, Ozzy Osbourne, Whitesnake, Dio, Whitesnake, the Guess Who and more; it might actually be easier to list the people this extraordinary rock bassist *hasn't* played with over the past nearly five decades.

Not only did Sarzo play with Randy Rhoads in Quiet Riot and Ozzy Osbourne's band, he also was one of Randy's closest friends. In fact, his book, *Off the Rails: Aboard the Crazy Train in the Blizzard of Ozz*, is a must-read for any serious Rhoads fan.

Rudy kindly took the time to recall some key moments during his precious time with Randy.

"The first time I saw Quiet Riot was in August 1977 at the Starwood in West Hollywood," Sarzo says. "I'd just moved to L.A. and was networking. I saw the band perform and went, 'Wow, these guys are doing an arena performance in a club. They've really got it together.' I was also super impressed by Randy. There were a bunch of guys in front of him checking out his playing, and also a lot of girls wearing the same polka-dotted bow tie he was [*wearing*]! He had the perfect balance, the perfect appeal: guys wanted to be like Randy, and girls wanted to be with Randy. I thought to myself, "That's a rock star in the making right there." I ran into Kevin [*DuBrow, Quiet Riot's vocalist*] afterwards, introduced myself and said, 'Keep doing what you're doing — you're going to make it.' And that was it."

A year later, Kevin called Rudy to audition, and the rest is now multi-platinum, Quiet Riot history.

Speaking of rock history, as you know, Randy left Quiet Riot in late 1979 to join forces with Osbourne after his somewhat unceremonious parting of the ways with Black Sabbath. "Randy was destined for greatness, and his mother, Delores, was instrumental in him taking the Ozzy Osbourne gig," Sarzo says. "She realized it was a huge opportunity for him, even though it meant him leaving both his families — Quiet Riot and also his job at her music school, Musonia. Delores was definitely a big deciding factor 'cause Randy was pretty comfortable teaching eight hours a day."

Rhoads [*second from left*] looks for a local guitar teacher in the Yellow Pages while having breakfast with [*from left*] Ozzy, Sharon Osbourne and Sarzo

> **"HENDRIX HAD TO GO TO ENGLAND TO BECOME HENDRIX, AND SO DID RANDY. HE HAD TO GO TO ENGLAND AND FREE HIMSELF MUSICALLY"**
>
> **RUDY SARZO**

After turning down an earlier offer, Rudy reunited with Randy when he joined Osbourne's touring band in March 1981. The musical difference he saw in his friend was palpable. "By the time I played with him in Ozzy, he'd already been honing that 'Randyness,'" Sarzo says with a laugh. "I wasn't playing with the guy in Quiet Riot anymore — I was playing with Randy Rhoads, the Hall of Fame guitar player! He was great in Quiet Riot, of course, but we were just a local band in L.A. trying to please the local record labels and get a deal. He obviously didn't need to do that with Ozzy because he was playing with a recording artist. He asked Ozzy, 'What do you want me to write?' And Ozzy's reply was, 'Just be yourself.' Ozzy gave Randy his freedom, and that's what came out.

"There was a major metamorphosis that happened in England, and it would have never happened in L.A. because of the musical atmosphere there at that time — or lack thereof, as far as rock 'n' roll and metal goes," Sarzo says. "It's funny; Hendrix had to leave the States to go to England to become Jimi Hendrix, and so did Randy — he had to leave Los Angeles, go to England and free himself musically and truly become Randy Rhoads. And just like Hendrix, Randy became a leader. He helped lead the metal invasion that came from England after he joined Ozzy. And you were a part of that [*writer/guitarist Nick Bowcott was a founding member of Grim Reaper*], so you know exactly what I'm talking about! He led the pack. There were a lot of great bands but only one Randy Rhoads."

The other major change Rudy witnessed occurred when Randy won a prestigious award. "It happened on December 30, 1981," Sarzo says. "It was the opening night of the U.S. *Diary of a Madman* tour and Randy received the "Best New Talent" award backstage from the editor of *Guitar Player*. That was a major pivot point for him because it put into perspective just how much people were paying attention to him. Remember, back then there was no social media — no posts, no videos, no nothing. There was no 'instant gratification.' After getting that award, I saw a whole new commitment — he went on this intense quest to become the best Randy that Randy could be. After getting that award, every time we hit a new town, Randy would immediately go for the yellow pages to try and find the best local music store or school that gave lessons. I actually have a photo of him doing that! Randy's theory was, 'I can tell how good the school is by what they offer in their ad.' Sometimes the teacher he chose didn't have the same level of musical knowledge that he had, so Randy wound up giving them a lesson and paying for it!" [*Laughs*]

"Randy is a life-changing experience," Sarzo adds. "He's changed a lot of lives and will continue to do so for many decades. As great as those Ozzy albums are, to witness Randy's live interpretation of what he recorded was mind blowing. If you were lucky enough to see him do that at multiple shows, as I was, you'd be really able to understand just how much Randy forever changed my life." GW

[*clockwise from top left*] Gojira's Christian Andreu in 2017 with his signature Jackson USA Rhoads RR

Nick Bowcott (holding Rhoads' Concorde) with Rhoads' mother, Delores, in 2009

Jackson's new-for-2022 Concept Series Rhoads RR24-7

ANGULAR AX-CELLENCE

THE LEGACY AND LEGEND OF RANDY'S ICONIC JACKSON RHOADS GUITARS

By Nick Bowcott

RANDY RHOADS NOT only had a massive influence on how metal guitar is played; he also had a profound impact on how metal guitars look, thanks to the now-legendary Jackson Rhoads guitars he helped design. On December 23, 1980, while on a break from Ozzy's *Blizzard of Ozz* tour, Rhoads visited Grover Jackson at his workshop at Charvel HQ. The guitarist pulled out a sketch he'd drawn on a cocktail napkin and asked Jackson to build him a guitar that looked something like a shark's fin. The pair sat down, and by midnight, the design Randy had conceived was completed and ready to be built.

The resulting white, angular, asymmetric ax was nicknamed "the Concorde" as it looked like the supersonic airliner of the same name — although legend has it that Rhoads named the guitar after the aircraft because he actually flew home (from the U.K.) aboard the Concorde in late 1980. It had neck-through construction like a Gibson Firebird, where the neck and center of the body are one piece of wood, with "wings" glued

{*continued on page 50*}

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ANDREW BENGE/REDFERNS MATT YORK JACKSON GUITARS

Sean Michael Clegg in 2022 with the April 2007 issue of *GW* and, of course, the guitar now known as RR3

PASSING IT ON

IN 1984, A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE PLACED A RARE RANDY RHOADS GUITAR IN THE HANDS OF AN ARDENT FAN. NOW, BY ANOTHER TWIST OF FATE, THE GUITAR WILL SOON HAVE A NEW OWNER

By Alan di Perna

BACK IN 2007, I wrote an article for *Guitar World* on an instrument that holds a special and unique place in the six-string legacy of Randy Rhoads. Now reverently known as RR3, it was the third custom, asymmetrical Flying V electric guitar made for Rhoads by California luthier Grover Jackson in the early Eighties. Sadly, Rhoads died — in a March 19, 1982, airplane accident while on tour with Ozzy Osbourne — before he could take delivery of the guitar.

Instead, the ax ended up in the hands of one of Randy's biggest fans, SoCal guitar ace Sean Michael Clegg. For the next 35 years, Clegg played the guitar on session dates and on gigs and studio recordings with his prog-metal band, Accomplice. He has fond memories of being onstage with the guitar when Accomplice opened for rock legends like Rush and Van Halen.

But now, financial challenges have compelled Clegg to sell his beloved and historic guitar. Parting with a treasured instrument is always tough for a musician. But Clegg is stoic about the situation.

"I suppose I always knew this guitar was an incredible investment," he says. "And it still will be for someone else. It's a lucky miracle that I can lean on the sale of this guitar when I need it the most. And, believe me, it's worth every penny of investment for the future. The RR Jackson is the coolest-looking stage guitar I've ever owned, delivering a tone and playability that are unmatched. It is by far the best-playing guitar I've ever owned, and it's been a true privilege shredding on it for all these years. I am thankful for my time with it."

The guitar is being offered through he ANALOGr auction site (check out the incredibly long url below), and — as of this writing — Clegg is also in direct contact with a few interested buyers.

"We estimate the value to be around $100,000 to $150,000," he says. "The auction could bring a higher price. Right now we are certainly considering any six-figure offer. The guitar is a dream and should go into the hands of a real player. Right now we have a couple of rock stars — who shall remain nameless — who have expressed interest. Whoever ends up with this guitar will be a lucky individual."

A bizarre series of lucky circumstances played a role in Clegg's acquisition of the instrument. Grover Jackson had built two previous prototypes for Rhoads — known as RR1 and RR2 — tweaking the design as Randy tested the instrument on the road with Osbourne and reported back to Jackson with design input. Jackson also cut the basic parts for a third guitar but didn't assemble them. He was waiting for Rhoads to come off tour to provide his final feedback on the design.

But, of course, Randy did not return from the tour. Grief-stricken, Jackson put away the unfinished pieces of the third guitar. There they lay until late 1983. At that time, the luthier had split off from Charvel to form his own company, Jackson Guitars. For the company's debut at the Winter NAMM Show in January 1984, Jackson assembled and completed the third Rhoads guitar, intending to use it as a display piece at the Anaheim, California, expo. Jackson was a hot new brand in those halcyon days of poodle cuts and spandex. The company's NAMM booth was mobbed. In the excitement and confusion, a hapless assistant

{*continued on page 50*}

RENE LAMONTAGNE/ANALOGR

https://www.analogr.com/l/lost-randy-rhoads-rr3-featured-in-guitar-world-april-2007/61f088c9-6cd0-4fb6-a1e1-d17a1a6e911f

MISTER-Y SOLVED

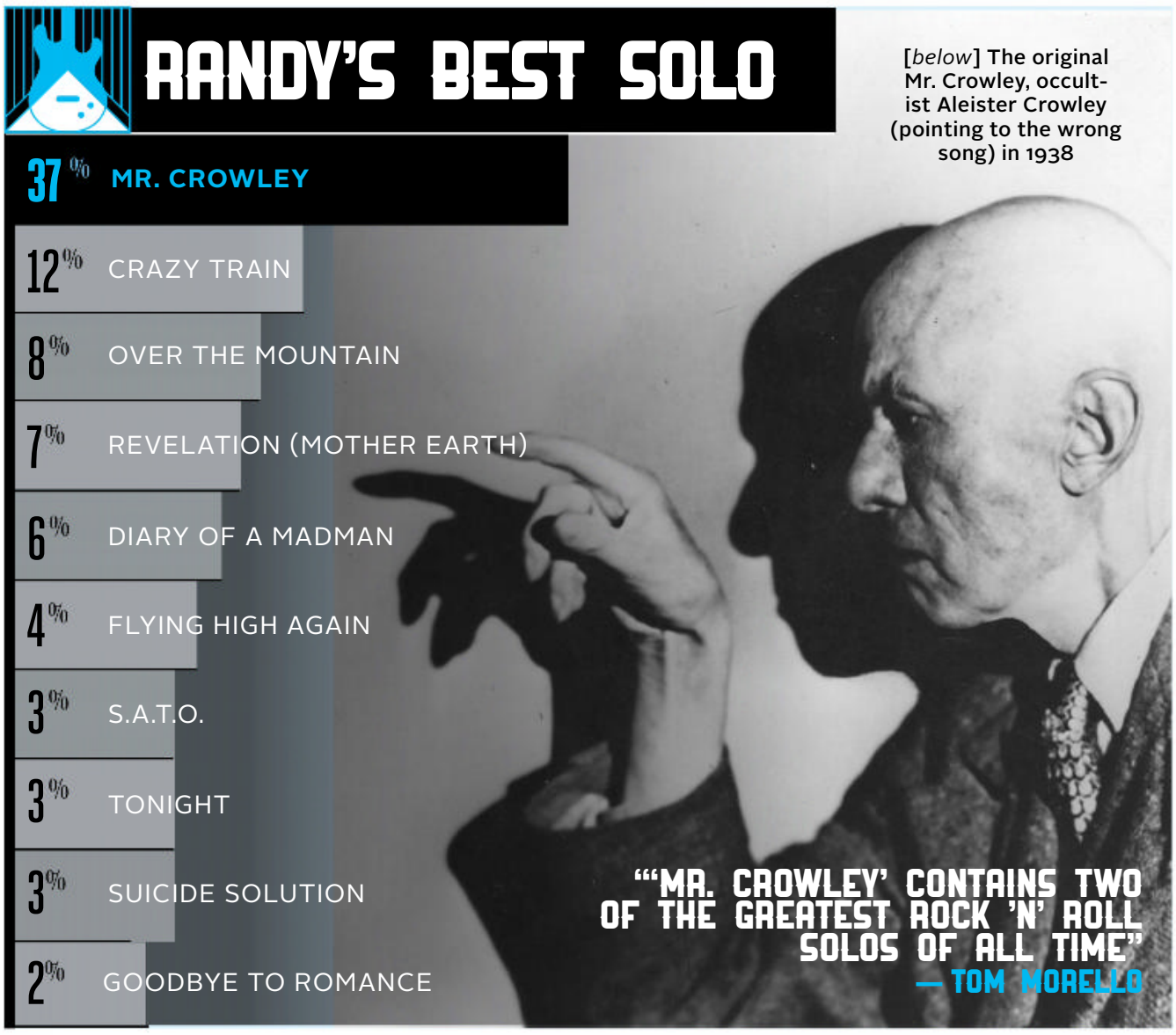
OR IS IT? WE ASKED THOUSANDS OF GUITARWORLD.COM READERS — AND A PANEL OF EXPERTS — TO ANSWER THIS SIMPLE QUESTION: WHAT IS RANDY RHOADS' GREATEST GUITAR SOLO?

BACK IN MARCH, we decided to pinpoint and identify — perhaps once and for all, since the results aren't about to change anytime soon — Randy Rhoads' greatest guitar solo. So we took two routes: 1. Ask our readers via a poll that appeared on GuitarWorld.com for most of the month (and then we shared the hell out of it on social media) and 2. ask our panel of experts. Let's start with the poll.

RANDY'S BEST, ACCORDING TO READERS

THERE WAS NO contest at all. "Mr. Crowley" — from Ozzy's *Blizzard of Ozz* — got off to an impressive start on the first day of the poll, and it never looked back, claiming more than 37 percent of the overall vote — all by its lonesome. Now, if this information makes you suddenly want to learn how to play "Mr. Crowley" note for note, solo and all, you're in luck; it's transcribed in this very issue, starting on page 84 (complete with Performance Notes on page 83)!

As for the rest of the poll results, just check out the graphic to the right. Also, please note that every Randy Rhoads recording got at least one vote, meaning that someone, somewhere, thinks his solo on Quiet Riot's "Face to Face" is more deserving than his playing on, say, Ozzy's "Flying High Again." Just thought we'd mention that!



[*below*] The original Mr. Crowley, occultist Aleister Crowley (pointing to the wrong song) in 1938

* THE 10 SONGS ABOVE REPRESENT 85 PERCENT OF THE VOTE; ALL THE REMAINING SONGS COMBINED (NOT SHOWN HERE) MADE UP THE FINAL 15 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. P.S.: THANKS FOR READING THE FINE PRINT!

RANDY'S BEST, ACCORDING TO THE PROS

ZAKK WYLDE: I love 'em all. To me, they're all his versions of the solos in "Hotel California" or "Stairway to Heaven" — solos that are a song within a song. You could literally play any one of Randy's leads and name the song; that's how amazing his solos are. They're all composed and worked out so they're an integral part of the song. There's a recording out there of him playing at the Whisky [*A Go Go, L.A.*] with Kevin DuBrow [*Quiet Riot vocalist*] and the guys right before he went out with Oz, and he's actually playing the solo in "Revelation" without the band. It's just him shredding that solo by himself in the club, and you immediately know what song it is. I rest my case!

If I had to pick just one? Today I'd say "Flying High Again," because it's fun to play and also because of its composition. Plus, there's the tapping bit over the chord changes at the end, which is just awesome. But if you ask me tomorrow, I might say "Revelation." Then the next day I might pick "S.A.T.O." or the outro solo in "Tonight" — the one you wish they didn't fade! And then, on Friday [*Laughs*]... it never ends!

My favorite Randy riff would have to be either the intro to "I Don't Know" — that's always a fun one to play — or the intro to "Diary of a Madman."

KIRK HAMMETT: My favorite Randy solo is the one in "S.A.T.O." I love the dynamic way he changes with the chords behind him, and it has tons of 'tude! In terms of a favorite song, I happen to think "Diary of a Madman" is one of the fin-

LEFT: PICTURE POST/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES JOHN ATASHIAN/GETTY IMAGES

[*left*] Rhoads on stage with his Sandoval V in 1981

est heavy metal songs ever written. For emotion, technique and sheer spookiness, it gets my vote every time!

NITA STRAUSS: I know "Crazy Train" is a very predictable, generic answer, but I'm giving it for a pretty good reason. Just like many other guitar players, the "Crazy Train" solo was the one I first taught myself how to two-hand-tap with. I have a fond memory of being in the Hollywood Guitar Center and playing the "Crazy Train" riff like you do when you're learning. And then some dude came up behind me and sarcastically goes, "Pfft! That's great, but can you play the solo?" So I started playing the lead and when I looked up he'd left! [*Laughs*] So that one has always had a fond place in my heart as a little bit of an "F you!" solo!

TOM MORELLO: My two favorite Randy Rhoads solos are in the same song. That song is "Mr. Crowley," and it contains two of the greatest rock 'n' roll solos of all time. The compositional excellence, fire, passion and melodic fury of each of those solos is unmatched.

ALEX SKOLNICK: "Flying High Again." It is a quick one, just in and out, yet it says so much in a short time. While some of it is obviously composed, especially the back half with its thematic, two-handed tapping lick, it captures a powerful, raw energy as though it were played "off the cuff." The two-handed part and its classically influenced chord movement underneath showed the world that it was possible to take the new craze of two-handed tapping technique and use it in a totally unique, highly musical way.

RUDY SARZO: I can't pick one of his solos; to me, they're all Randy talking at that moment. It's a conversation. It's a soliloquy. It's Randy expressing himself musically at that particular moment in time.

JARED JAMES NICHOLS: I always go back to the first solos and riffs that got me excited to play. Truth be told, they still get me fired up after all these years. The ripping intro to "I Don't Know," the solo to "Over the Mountain" or the heaviness of "Revelation (Mother Earth)." It all hits me hard. Even as much of a blues guy as I am, Randy had soul, and I can feel that.

PAUL GILBERT: I love the instrumental piece Randy did before his unaccompanied solo live; I don't know if it had a name, though. I love the unaccompanied solo too; it has a short arpeggio part that sounded a bit classical, although Randy played it with full-blast distortion. That instantly caught my ear the very first time I heard it.

DAVE MUSTAINE: I think it would have to be from the first record, because of the way Ozzy held the world captive with this outrageously talented new band. Randy's solos were seemingly all planned (written ahead of time) and yet they seemed absolutely perfect for whatever the riff called for. In terms of a favorite song, it's either "Over the Mountain" or "Crazy Train."

PHIL X: That's a tough one. I could easily list five and tell you why. But if I have to pick just one, it's "Flying High Again." So much attitude! And then there's the tapping part, but not because he tapped it. What made him think of that brilliant chord progression?

RICHIE FAULKNER: "Mr. Crowley" is probably my all-time favorite. That said, I also really love the solo in "You Looking at Me Looking at You." I just love the way it's constructed — how he incorporates major scales in the beginning, and then goes off into classical voicings the more the solo progresses.

GEORGE LYNCH: "Flying High" because it's so unorthodox — and at the same time so deeply satisfying because it all makes sense when you listen to it. It might not make sense on paper — or maybe it does? I don't know [*Laughs*] — but it certainly had the effect he intended. And it was very different from the straight pentatonic stuff from the players we all know and love, who also do incredible stuff. Randy was coming from a more classical perspective, and then throwing in the rock tricks — the histrionics. He was very inventive with all the flamboyant stuff too, using it to punctuate his classically based pieces with. It was a really refreshing approach.

JOHN 5: The guitar solo from the live album because it just shows everything. I just listened to it the other day — it's amazing. He must have really planned out that solo. Of course, it's got tons of flash but it's so rhythmic too. In fact, all his solos had so much attack and rhythm. There are parts of that solo that could be instrumental songs because those passages are so cool, rhythmically perfect and inventive.

PHIL DEMMEL: I'm always going to go with his lead in "Revelation (Mother Earth)." The way that solo builds and draws you in is amazing. In fact, I'm getting legitimate goose bumps right now just talking about it! It's the perfectly constructed lead.

DOUG ALDRICH: When I heard "Over the Mountain," that initially struck me as one of my favorites, but then seeing him play "Revelation (Mother Earth)" was incredible. It's really hard to narrow it down to just one. He would have a solo like "Flying High Again" that I don't know if there's even a bend in — there's just great attack, note choice and phrasing, and then, of course, that tapping part that's really classically influenced. Then there's stuff like "Diary of a Madman" where it's all about the feel. Then there's "Crazy Train"! How can you pick just one Randy solo? They're all my favorites!

MARK MORTON: "Over the Mountain" is my favorite Randy solo, and I'd imagine that's a popular response. You know it's coming up and you're excited for it every time — even now, 40 years later! The way he starts it is really memorable, and then it goes into that beautifully played run before switching into that super-playful, whammy bar stuff. It's a fun, exciting solo, but it's also very musical. Randy really does a lot of things in a really short period of time. It really demonstrates the wide scope of his lead playing.

COURTNEY COX: I'm gonna go with "Diary of a Madman." The solo and the entire song was just so dark, haunting and mesmerizing to a young C.C. — instant chills! It's also proof that you don't have to play at the speed of light when the composition is so perfect and the notes are just right.

— Nick Bowcott (with a wee bit of Damian Fanelli)

ANGULAR AX-CELLANCE

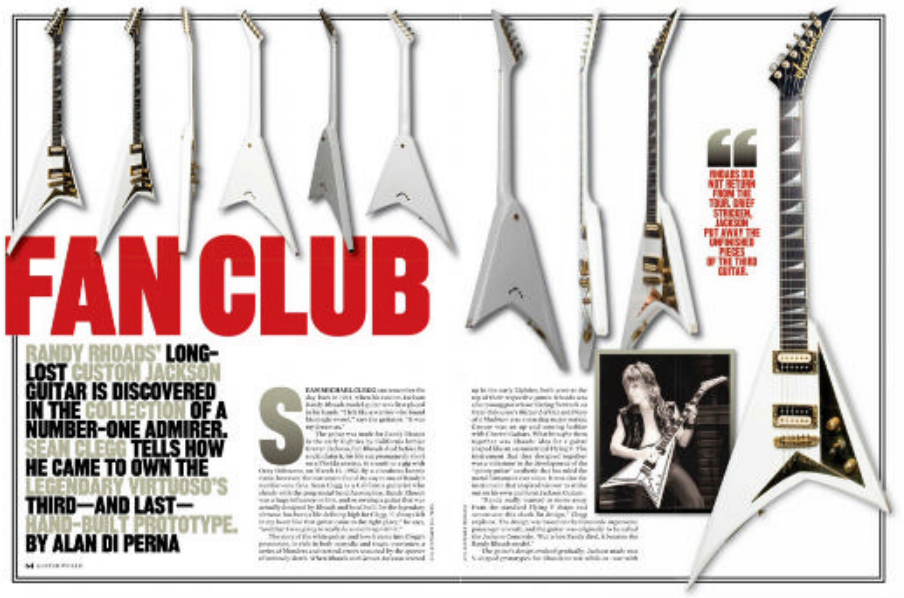
continued from page 46

onto the sides to make the rest of the shape. The entire guitar was made of maple.

Due to its futuristic, "pointy" aesthetic, Grover was worried that putting the Charvel logo on its headstock might possibly alienate some of the company's more traditionally minded customers, and so the Jackson brand was born. They designed a new headstock — an angular take on the Gibson Explorer — and made the first Jackson. Randy took the guitar on tour and it quickly became synonymous with him. As a result of his extensive road-testing, he came up with a few refinements. The changes included making the body shape smaller and sleeker (remember, Randy was a pretty small fellow) and also making the higher frets more easily accessible by moving the spot where the body meets the neck. The resulting black Jackson prototype met with Randy's approval, and the now legendary Jackson RR line of guitars was born — and so began the era of "pointy" metal axes.

To this day, Jackson's RR line of guitars remains incredibly popular with players and fans; the line also is treated to frequent updates and refreshers, including the brand's new-for-2022 Concept Series Rhoads RR24 HS and Concept Series Rhoads RR24-7. In fact, back in 2006, you guys, *GW*'s readership, voted it the most "Legendary Guitar" in our 25th anniversary readers poll — beating out instruments from Eddie Van Halen, Jimmy Page, B.B. King and SRV. Not surprisingly, Jackson offers the best-selling, iconic RR design at all price points: from entry level to Custom Shop and all points (awful pun not intended) in between, including a 2/3rds scale JS Series Minion model. Yes, even youngsters can start out with a Rhoads ax!

In 2010, Jackson released an extremely limited edition in conjunction with the Rhoads family — an exact replica of Randy's legendary Concorde. The original was painstakingly measured by the much-lauded pairing of Mike Shannon [*Jackson*] and Chip Ellis [*Fender — the man responsible for the amazing limited-edition Edward Van Halen "Frankenstein" relics*], and every single scratch, dent, ding and divot was replicated. As a bonus, the resulting 60 handcrafted relics came with a certificate of authenticity signed by Randy's mother, Delores. The price? A seemingly random $12,619.56 that's actually anything but random — and I'm 110 percent guilty for it (I was the product manager at Jackson Guitars at the time). The reason for said price tag? Randy's birth date — 12/6/1956. GW



The opening spread of our initial Sean Michael Clegg feature from the April 2007 issue

PASSING IT ON

continued from page 46

made a major error: he sold the guitar to a NAMM attendee, not realizing that it was a one-of-a-kind prototype that Rhoads himself had helped to design — a piece of heavy metal history.

"A few hours later, Grover's going, 'Where's Randy's guitar. Where's Randy's guitar?'" Clegg told me in '07 [*see the April 2007 issue*], recounting the story as he'd heard it from Jackson himself. "Grover had a total, freak-out panic attack."

The purchaser was a guy named Mike, whose surname has been lost to history. Apparently, Mike didn't know what he had. A few months after the NAMM Show, he traded the guitar to a music store in Long Beach, California, for some far more ordinary gear. Young Sean Clegg was working in the shop as a guitar teacher, valued for his knowledge of Randy Rhoads riffs. When Mike presented the guitar, Clegg's eyes popped out of his head. He immediately knew he had to own it

"I felt like the Lord had brought me a magic sword to fulfill my destiny," he says. "We gave the guy a Neal Schon model Aria Pro II guitar, a Roland Jazz Chorus amp, some cords and whatever other small accessories he wanted in exchange for the Randy guitar. It added up to a couple thousand dollars retail."

This was, however, more than Clegg could afford at the time. Fortunately his employer was looking out for him.

"I was 17, and my boss was sort of a father figure and mentor to me. He and my mother pitched in and helped me get the guitar." Clegg's boss let him work off his repayment, and the young guitarist saved up to pay back his mother. Within a year, Clegg had repaid his debts and was putting the guitar to use regularly.

RR3 is truly a one-of-a kind instrument that differs from stock Rhoads models and from the other prototypes Jackson built for Rhoads. Most noticeably, RR3 boasts a Gibson-style stop tailpiece rather than the tremolo tailpiece featured on stock models. The strings pass through the neck-thru body and are drawn over the bridge at a sharp angle, which enhances sustain. The headstock — in the "hockey stick" shape so iconic to Eighties metal — has a severe tilt, which also adds to the instrument's sustaining properties. This is such an early prototype that the Jackson logo on the headstock was hand-drawn by Grover himself.

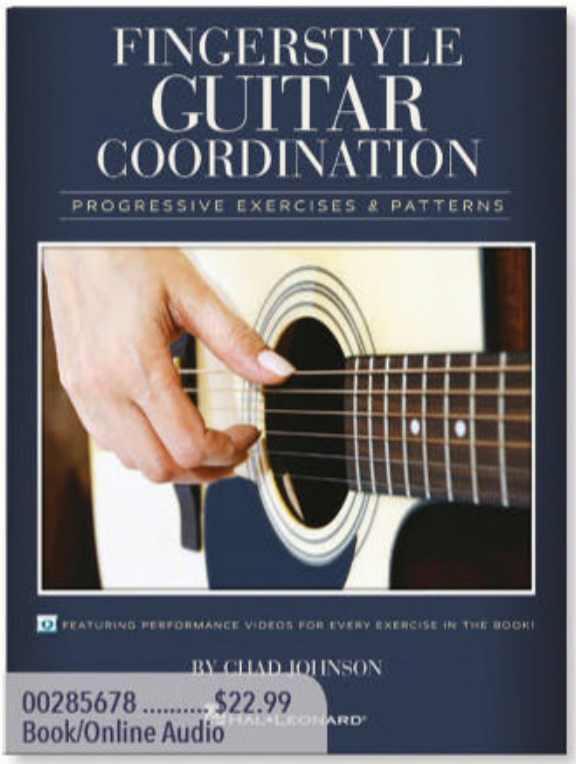
"There were no decals or anything," Clegg says. "And, of course, there's no serial number on the guitar." The hardware is one-of-a-kind as well. "All the Jacksons you see in production have a lot of plastic on them," Clegg said in '07: "Plastic knobs, plastic pickguard.... But on this guitar, the pickguard and everything else is solid brass. Grover told me he had a metal worker somewhere in Fullerton [*California*] cut it by hand."

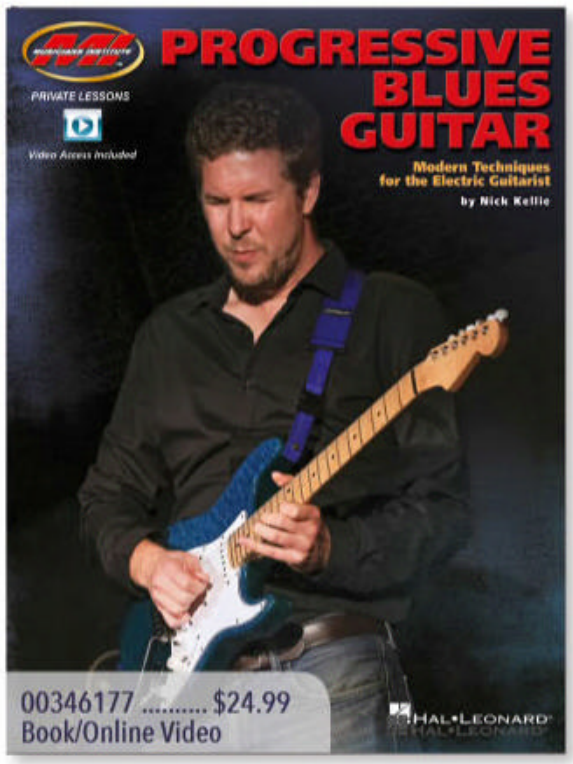
Randy Rhoads' original concept for the guitar that would forever bear his name was based on the Concorde supersonic passenger aircraft — an asymmetrical version of the classic Gibson Flying V body shape, with the upper body bout significantly larger than the lower one and much sharper angles all around. The design would become a milestone in the evolution of the heavy metal "pointy guitar" aesthetic. It was originally slated to be called the Jackson Concorde, but after Rhoads' passing it became the Randy Rhoads model.

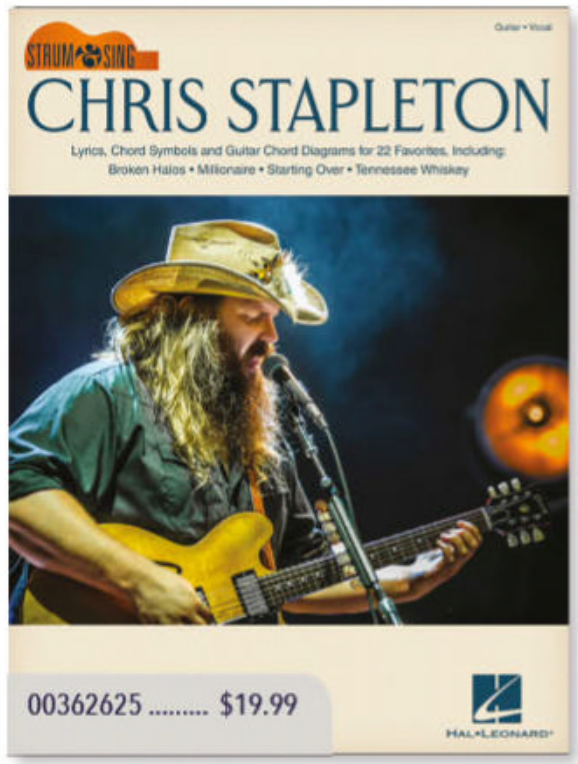
RR3 is an integral part of that legacy — a missing link, if you will, between earlier prototypes and the production models that have sold in vast quantities. It's a slab of metal history that also happens to be an eminently playable, finely crafted musical instrument.

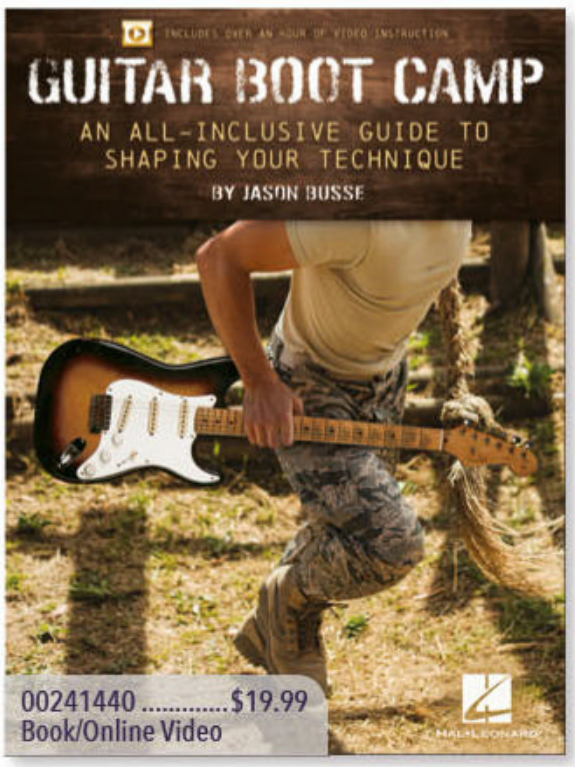
"It wants to be played," Clegg says. "Whatever you have to offer musically, it will deliver for you on the other end 100 percent. It's one of the first true shred guitars, and in my humble opinion, one of the best playing guitars ever made. An instrument truly made for a virtuoso." GW

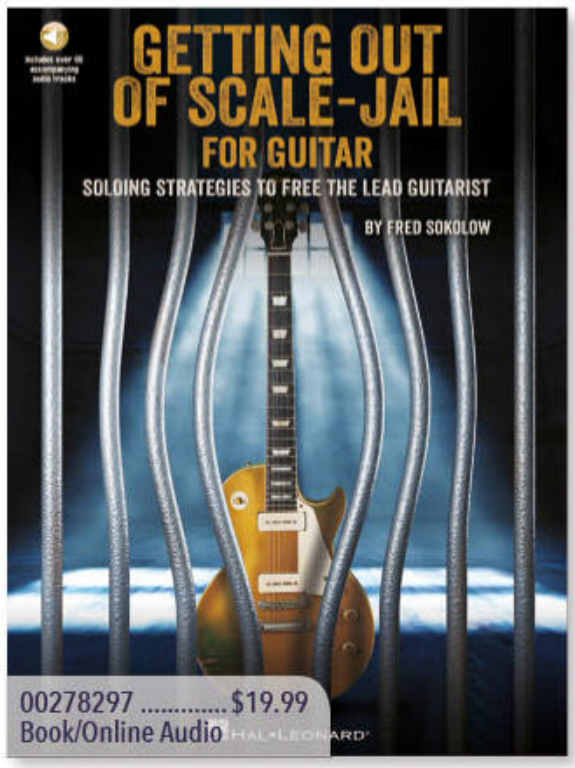
HOT GUITAR BOOKS FROM HAL LEONARD

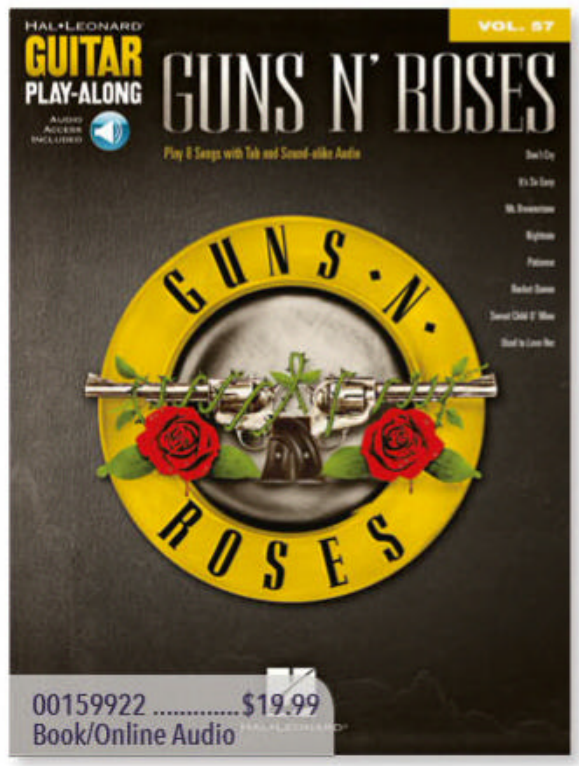


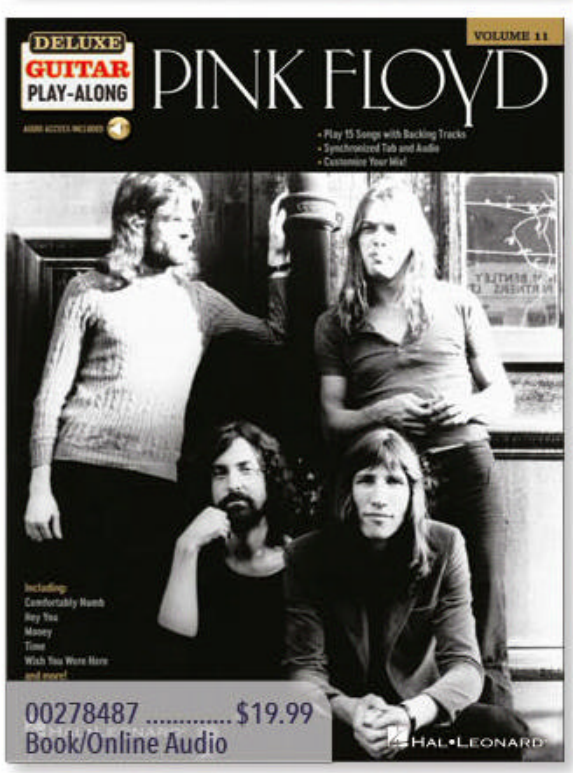


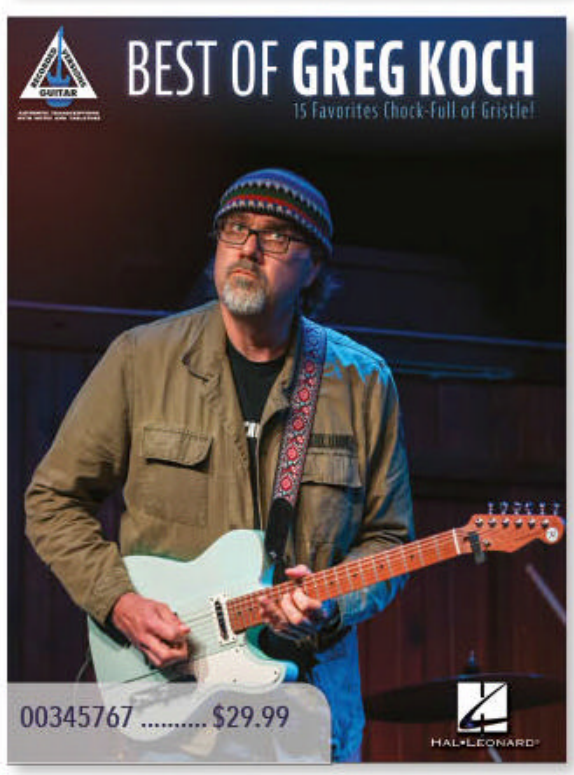


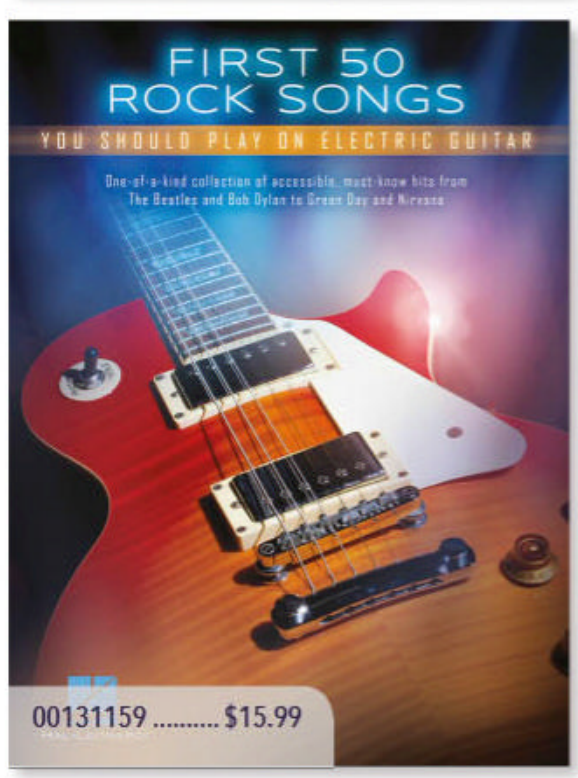












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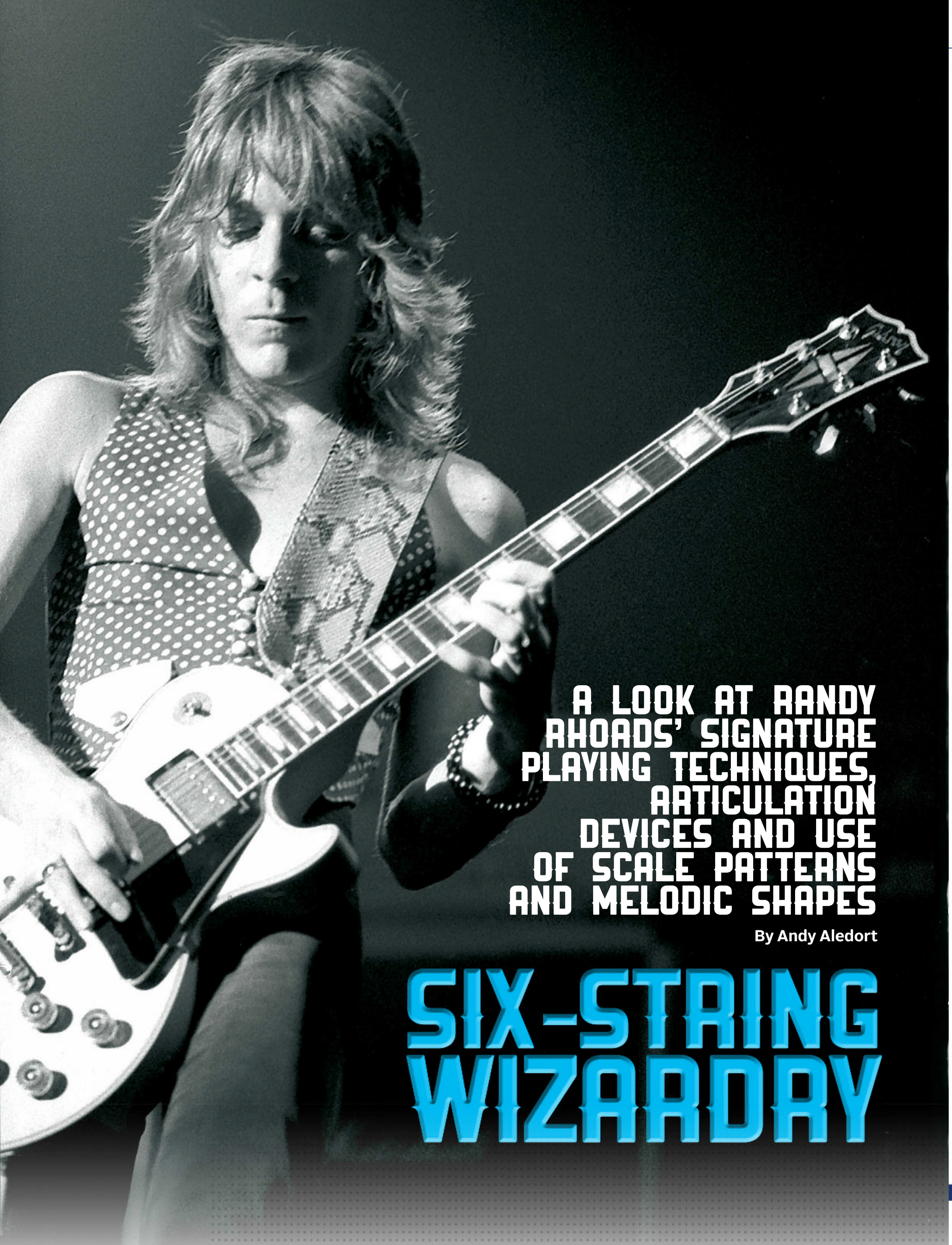


A LOOK AT RANDY RHOADS' SIGNATURE PLAYING TECHNIQUES, ARTICULATION DEVICES AND USE OF SCALE PATTERNS AND MELODIC SHAPES

By Andy Aledort

SIX-STRING WIZARDRY

RANDY RHOADS' PLAYING was infused with brilliant technique, cutting-edge musical adventurousness and a powerfully emotional delivery. On Ozzy Osbourne's 1980 solo debut, *Blizzard of Ozz*, and its follow-up, 1981's *Diary of a Madman*, Rhoads laid down the gauntlet for a new approach to the instrument and established a standard for metal guitar playing that still holds to this day, despite his death in 1982.

The minor pentatonic scale was a staple of Randy's solo improvisations, but he was also schooled in the fundamental modes, which are the seven different harmonic orientations, or aspects, of the major scale. In his solos, Randy often combined elements of minor pentatonic, the blues scale and minor modes, such as Dorian and Aeolian.

Let's begin with a look at minor pentatonic in the key of A (A minor pentatonic scale: A, C, D, E, G). **FIGURE 1** shows this scale played across all six strings in 5th position. A great way to practice this scale — and one of the ways Randy taught it to his students — is to break it into triplets, or three-note groups, and play them in ascending and descending patterns. **FIGURE 2a** illustrates the scale played in a descending eighth-note triplet pattern, with each successive three-note group starting one note lower in the scale. **FIGURE 2b** shows the same idea ascending. Use alternate picking throughout these figures to build up your picking speed and precision.

You should also practice these patterns using legato articulations, such as pull-offs and hammer-ons, both of which are performed with the fret hand alone. **FIGURE 2c** shows how you can play the descending pattern with pull-offs: wherever two notes are sounded on the same string, the first note is picked and the second note, which is lower and pre-fretted, is sounding by releasing the previous note's finger from the string in a downward flicking motion. When playing the ascending pattern, as shown in **FIGURE 2d**, use a hammer-on when moving to a higher note on the same string, quickly and firmly tapping the finger down onto the string.

A cool phrasing variation that Rhoads would share with his students is to incorporate pull-offs into the ascending pattern (see **FIGURE 2e**). Randy did this in many of his solos — "Flying High Again" and "Diary of a Madman" are two great examples — and it can also be heard in solos by Jimmy Page, Johnny Winter and Jimi Hendrix. Another options is to use every available hammer-on and pull-off, to achieve an even smoother sound, as in **FIGURE 2f**.

One of the technical approaches Rhoads stressed in his teachings was connecting scale positions. **FIGURE 3** illustrates A minor pentatonic played in an "extended" pattern, starting in 3rd position and progressing up to 10th. Play descending triplets using this fingering pattern, articulated with alternate picking (**FIGURE 4a**). **FIGURE 4b** incorporates pull-offs and slides. **FIGURES 4c** and **4d** show these patterns played in an ascending manner, using both alternate picking and legato articulations. When playing these runs, try *palm muting* — lay the edge of your pick-hand palm across the strings at the bridge saddles — to achieve a heavier, more percussive sound and help suppress unwanted idle-string noise.

In his guitar solo spotlights with Ozzy, one of Randy's favorite techniques was to take small pieces of ascending triplet patterns in minor pentatonic and repeat them.

FIGURE 5a offers an example of this "repeated triplet" technique, played in 3rd position on the bottom two strings using alternate picking. **FIGURE 5b** illustrates the same pattern with hammer-ons and pull-offs.

Staying within A minor pentatonic, we can find a similar shape two frets higher across the A and D strings, as shown in **FIGURE 5c**. As shown in **FIGURE 5d**, we can move this shape up to the next higher pair of strings in this same position and play the same pattern.

Another way to utilize this approach is to start each three-note shape with the higher note instead of the lower one, as demonstrated in **FIGURE 6**. Once this feels comfortable, try applying the same pattern up the fretboard and on other pairs of adjacent strings. In his lessons, Rhoads would also

A MINOR PENTATONIC

FIG. 1 A minor pentatonic scale, fifth position

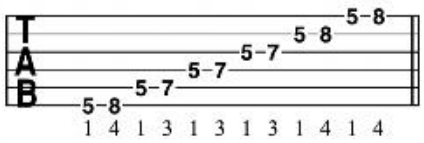


FIG. 2a triplets, descending w/alternate picking

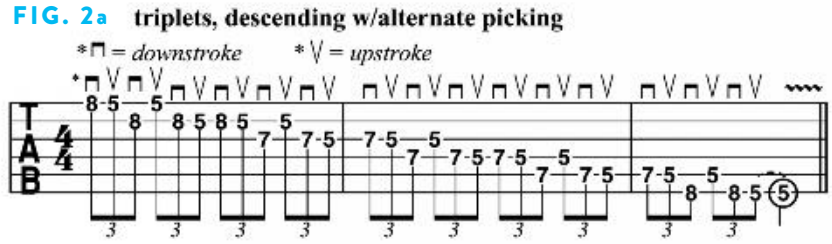


FIG. 2b triplets, ascending w/alternate picking

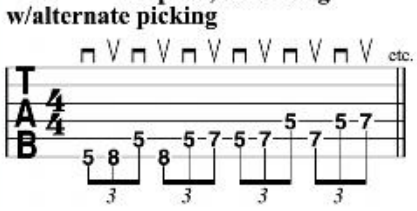


FIG. 2c triplets, descending w/pull-offs

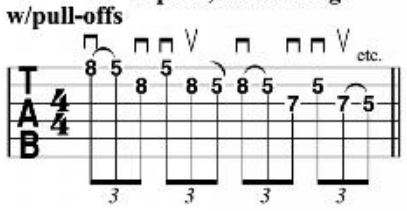


FIG. 2d triplets, ascending w/hammer-ons

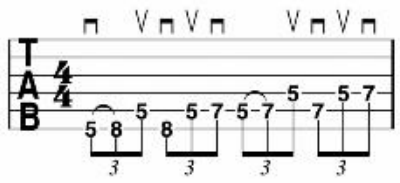


FIG. 2e triplets, ascending w/pull-offs

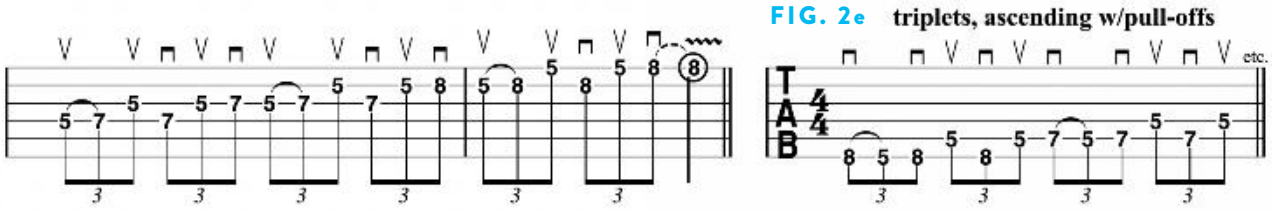


FIG. 2f triplets, ascending w/pull-offs and hammer-ons

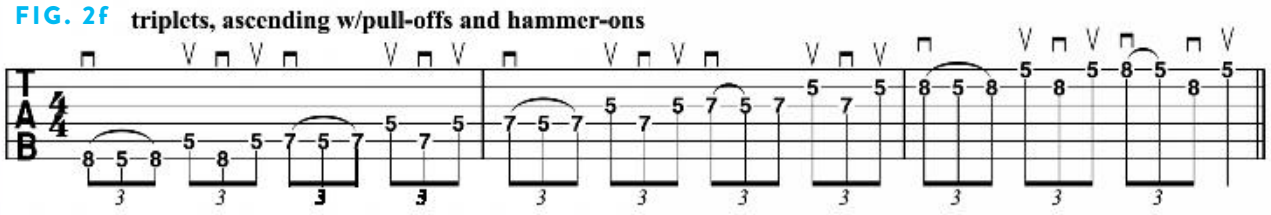


FIG. 3 A minor pentatonic, extended pattern

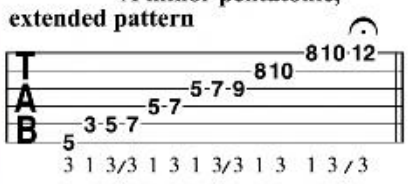


FIG. 4a triplets, descending w/alternate picking

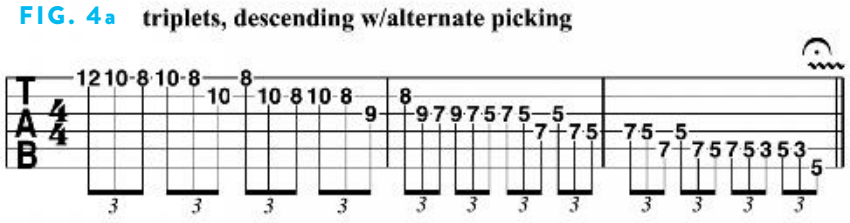


FIG. 4b triplets, descending w/pull-offs and slides

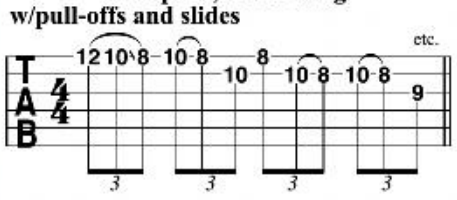


FIG. 4c triplets, ascending w/alternate picking

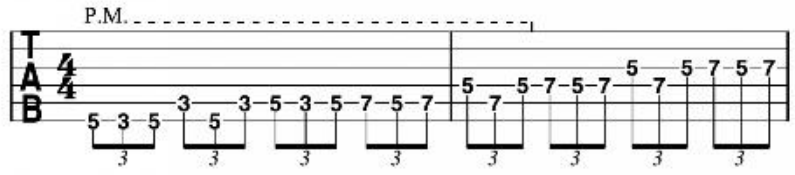
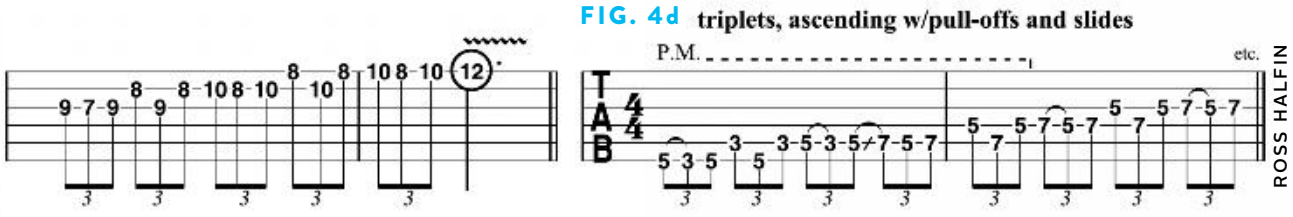


FIG. 4d triplets, ascending w/pull-offs and slides



ROSS HALFIN

FIG. 5a w/alternate picking

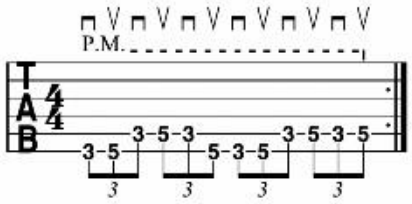


FIG. 5b w/hammer-ons and pull-offs

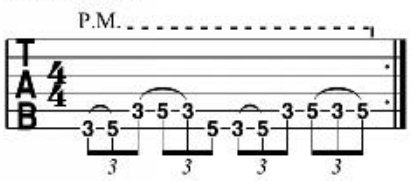


FIG. 5c w/alternate picking

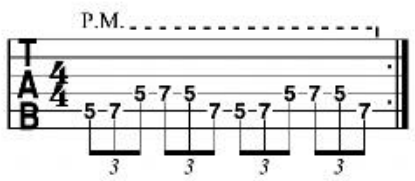


FIG. 5d w/alternate picking

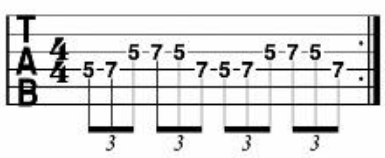


FIG. 6 w/hammer-ons and pull-offs

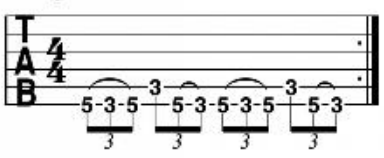


FIG. 7a E minor pentatonic (fifth-string root)

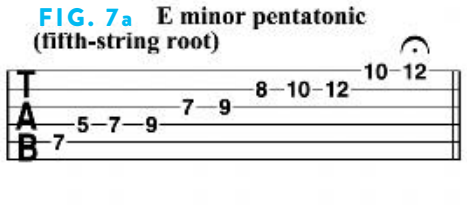


FIG. 7b w/alternate picking

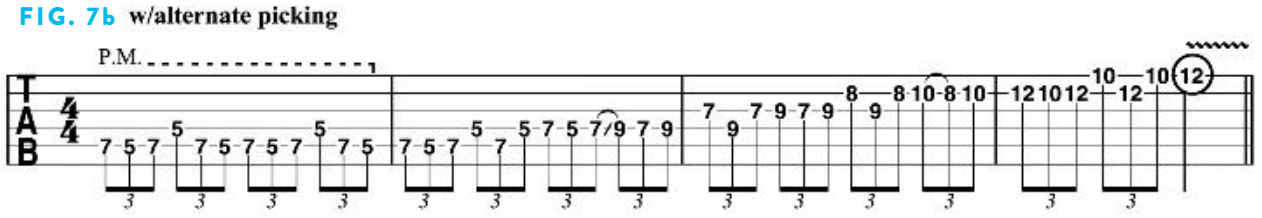


FIG. 7c triplets, descending w/hammer-ons, pull-offs and slides

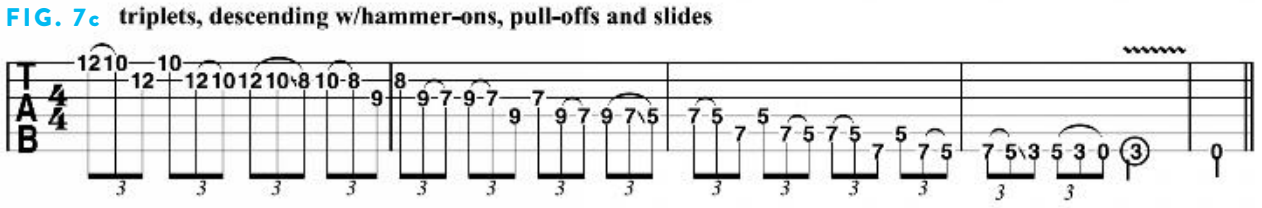


FIG. 8a A minor pentatonic, descending quadruplet pattern

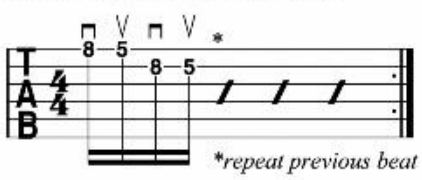


FIG. 8b

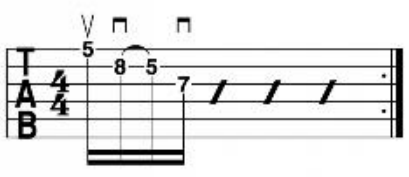


FIG. 8c

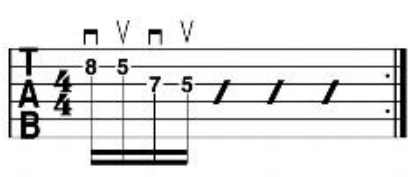
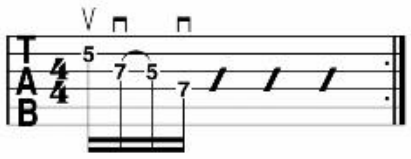


FIG. 8d



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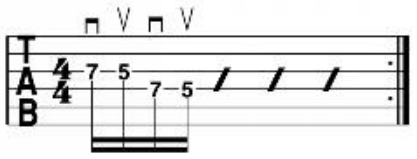
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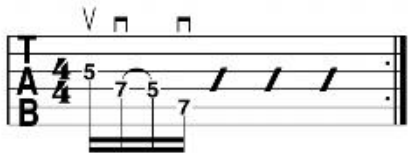


FIG. 8g

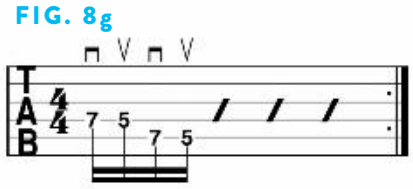


FIG. 8h

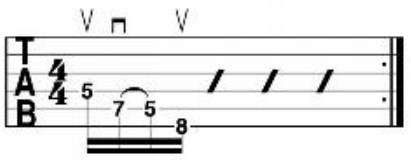
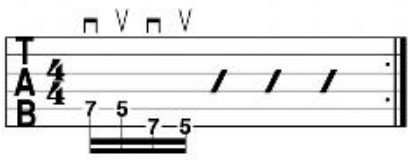


FIG. 8i



A BLUES SCALE

FIG. 9a A blues scale, fifth position

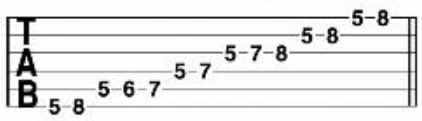


FIG. 9b triplets descending, w/pull-offs

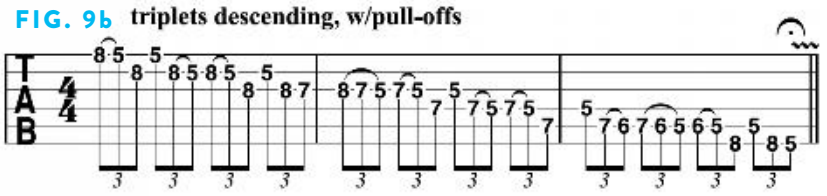
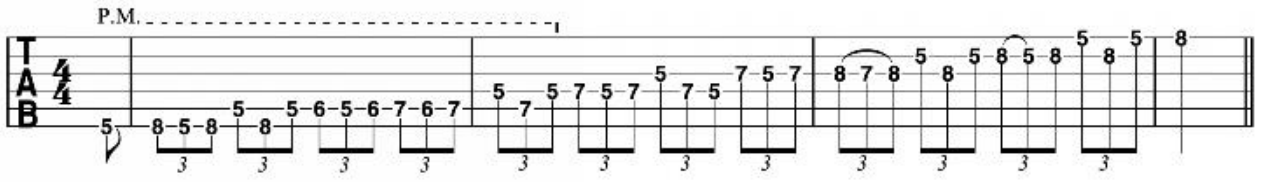


FIG. 9c triplets, ascending



MINOR MODES: DORIAN AND AEOLIAN

FIG. 10 four-note pattern (quadruplets)

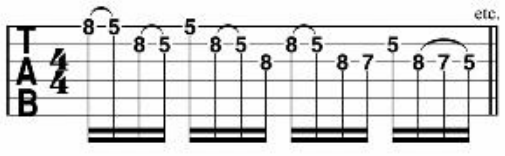
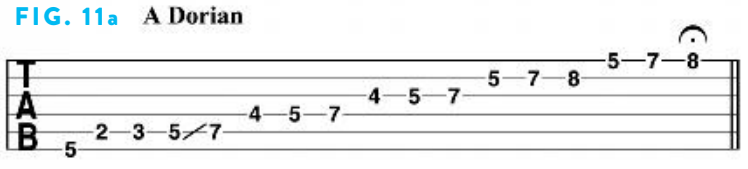


FIG. 11a A Dorian



stress the importance and benefits of moving these concepts over to 5th-string-root minor pentatonic scale positions. Here, we'll use an extended pattern for E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D), initiated with the root on the 5th string (see **FIGURE 7a**). If we apply the approach from **FIGURE 6** and use it to ascend this scale, we get the pattern shown in **FIGURE 7b**. Be sure to also practice descending triplets with this pattern as in **FIGURE 7c**.

Now let's take the idea of repeating a portion of the A minor pentatonic scale and apply it to four-note groups, or quadruplets. Starting in 5th position with the highest notes available, **FIGURE 8a** depicts a four-note descending pattern with two notes on the high E string and two on the B string; be sure to practice this pattern using alternate picking as well as pull-offs. Starting the pattern one note lower in the scale position gives us **FIGURE 8b**. This shape sounds particularly good with a pull-off from G to E on the B string, and many rock players favor a "stretched out" fingering position, using their ring finger instead of the pinkie for the G note, along with the middle finger for the D note on the G string. **FIGURES 8c-i** illustrate the descending progression of this pattern through the entire scale in this same position.

As is common practice when soloing in rock, blues and metal, Rhoads would often incorporate the blues scale along with the minor pentatonic and minor modes, such as Dorian and Aeolian. The blues scale includes the same five notes as minor pentatonic and adds the flatted 5th. In the key of A, the flatted 5th (♭5) is E♭. **FIGURE 9a** illustrates the A blues scale (A, C, D, E♭, E, G) played in 5th position, and **FIGURES 9b** and **9c** show the scale played in descending and ascending triplets. Just as we had done with minor pentatonic, let's play the blues scale in descending four-note patterns, as shown in **FIGURE 10**, utilizing pull-offs throughout.

Randy often took a modal approach to soloing, as heard on classic solos from songs like "Over the Mountain," "Mr. Crowley" and "Revelation (Mother Earth)." Since the majority of the music Rhoads recorded with Ozzy emphasized minor keys, for a "heavier" sound, we'll focus our attention here on the two most commonly used minor modes, Dorian and Aeolian.

FIGURE 11a illustrates the A Dorian mode (A, B, C, D, E, F♯, G) played in 2nd through 5th positions. Both Dorian and Aeolian contain the five notes of minor pentatonic, but each additionally includes the 2nd and 6th scale degrees. In Dorian, those are the major 2nd and major 6th; in the key of A minor, the pitches are B and F♯, respectively. Let's apply the previously used "triplets" approach to A Dorian, played descending and ascending

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/July2022

(see **FIGURES 11b** and **11c**, respectively).

FIGURE 12a depicts the A Aeolian mode (A, B, C, D, E, F, G) played in 2nd through 5th positions. This scale is nearly identical to A Dorian, the only difference being the 6th degree, which in Aeolian is flatted (♭6); in this case that's F natural. If we apply the triplets approach to this mode, we get the pattern shown in **FIGURES 12b** and **12c**.

A great example of Randy combining the blues scale with a modal approach can be heard in some of the licks he plays during the chorus of "Crazy Train," wherein he combines notes from F♯ minor pentatonic and F♯ Aeolian. **FIGURE 13** demonstrates how this idea may be similarly applied in A minor, drawing notes from A blues and A Aeolian.

Rhoads was a big fan of classical music and would often adorn his lead licks and melodies with ornamental melodic devices borrowed from the baroque period. A good example is his use of *mordents*: as shown in **FIGURE 14**, a mordent is a melodic device in which a note is surrounded by its closest lower and higher pitches within the scale: the target note is played first, followed by the higher note, then the target note, then the lower note, then the target note again. Using the A Aeolian pattern illustrated in **FIGURE 15a**, Randy would often progress downward through the scale in a free manner, utilizing every available mordent, as in **FIGURE 15b**.

Let's finish with some Rhoads-style fretboard tapping. Randy utilized this technique to great effect on two of his most celebrated solos, in "Crazy Train" and "Flying High Again." Fretboard tapping employs a combination of standard fretting with the sounding of one or more notes by hammering onto the fretboard with a pick-hand finger, typically the index or middle finger. For finger tapping, Randy would use his middle finger, but just as often, if not more so, he would tap the string with the edge of his pick, in a sort of quick bouncing motion.

FIGURE 16 is a repeating triplet exercise that incorporates tapping to sound the first note on each string, followed by a double pull-off. When tapping, firmly hammer the finger or pick down onto the string between the 12th and 11th frets. When pulling off, flick the string downward toward the floor to keep the string vibating. The second and third notes of each triplet must be pre-fretted before pulling off to them. In this example, the tapped shape moves across all six strings, sounding triad arpeggios that describe a progression of chords. Rhoads employed this technique similarly in both his "Crazy Train" and "Flying High Again" solos, but quickly "double tapping" (tapping on and off twice) before sounding both of the lower pitches. GW

FIG. 11b triplets, descending w/pull-offs

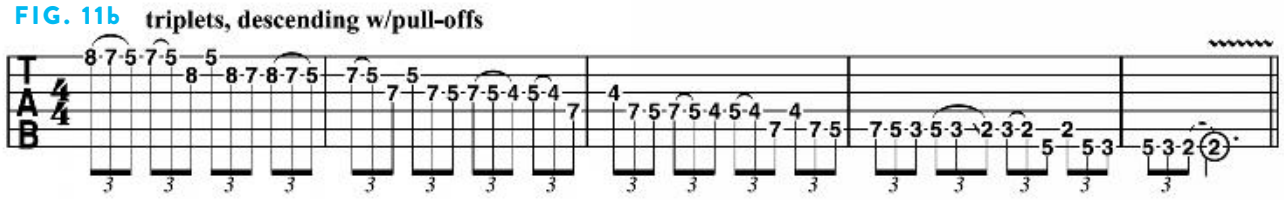


FIG. 11c triplets, ascending

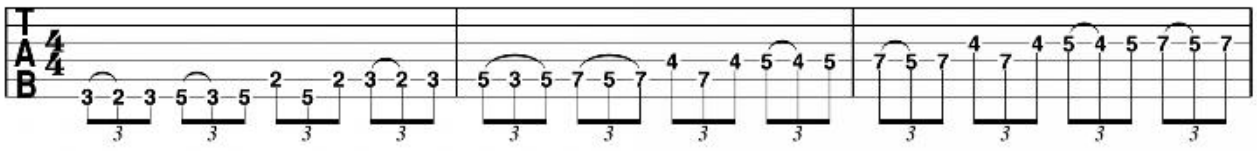


FIG. 12a A Aeolian

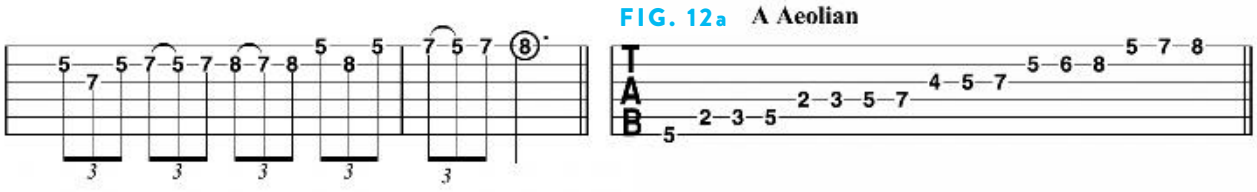


FIG. 12b triplets, descending

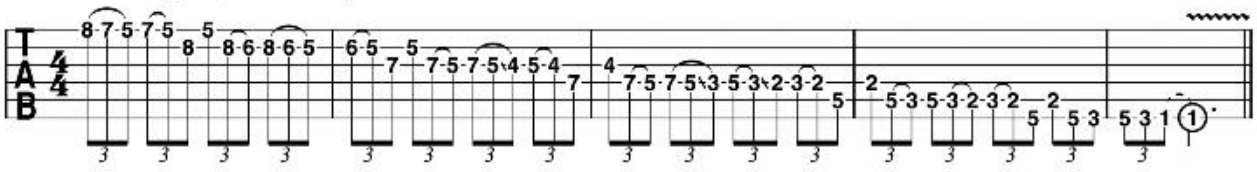


FIG. 12c triplets, ascending

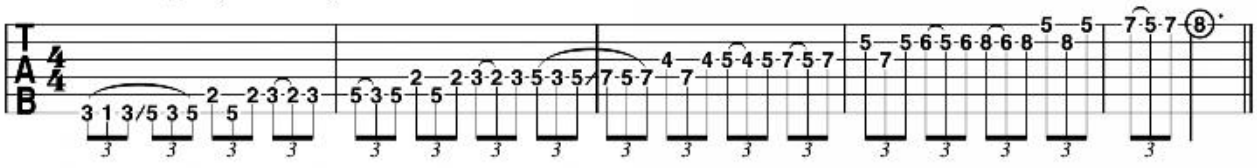


FIG. 13

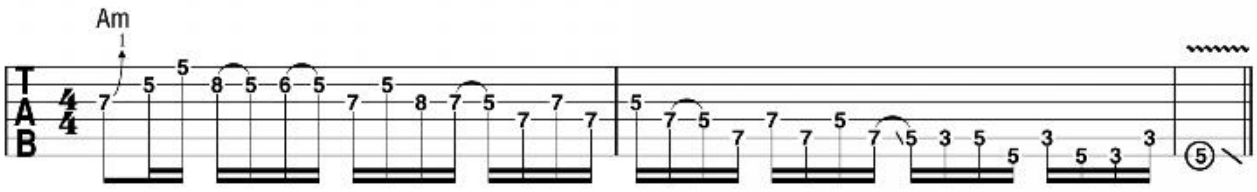



FIG. 14 "mordent"

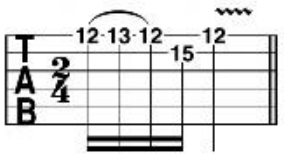


FIG. 15a A Aeolian

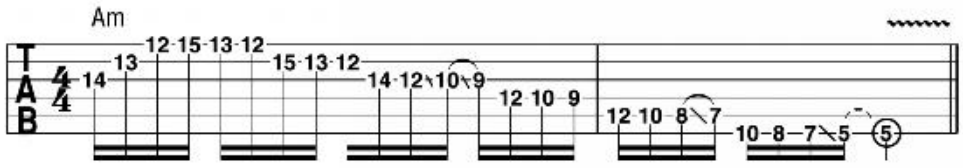


FIG. 15b

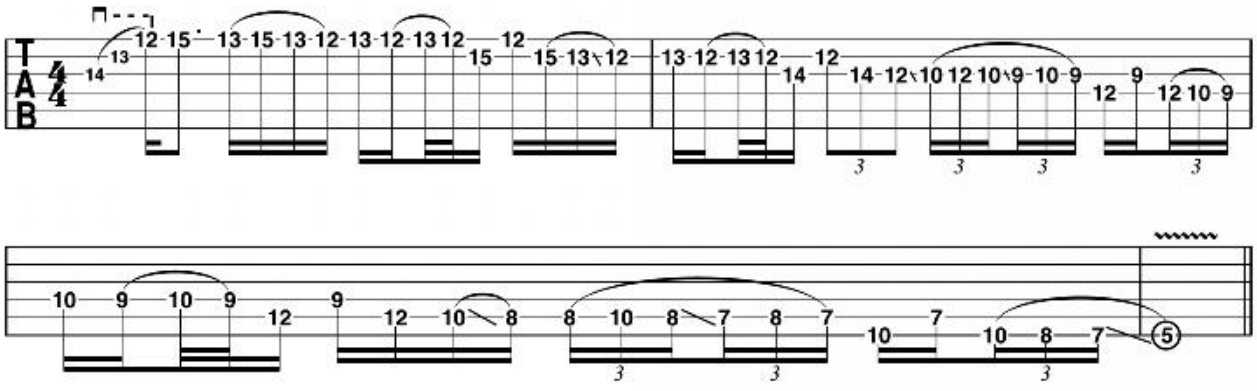
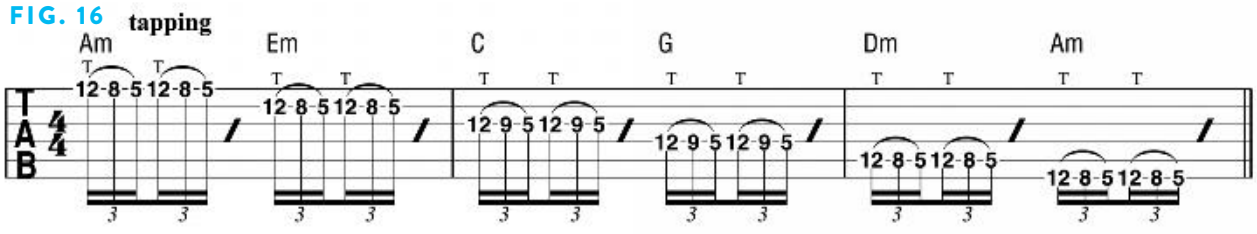
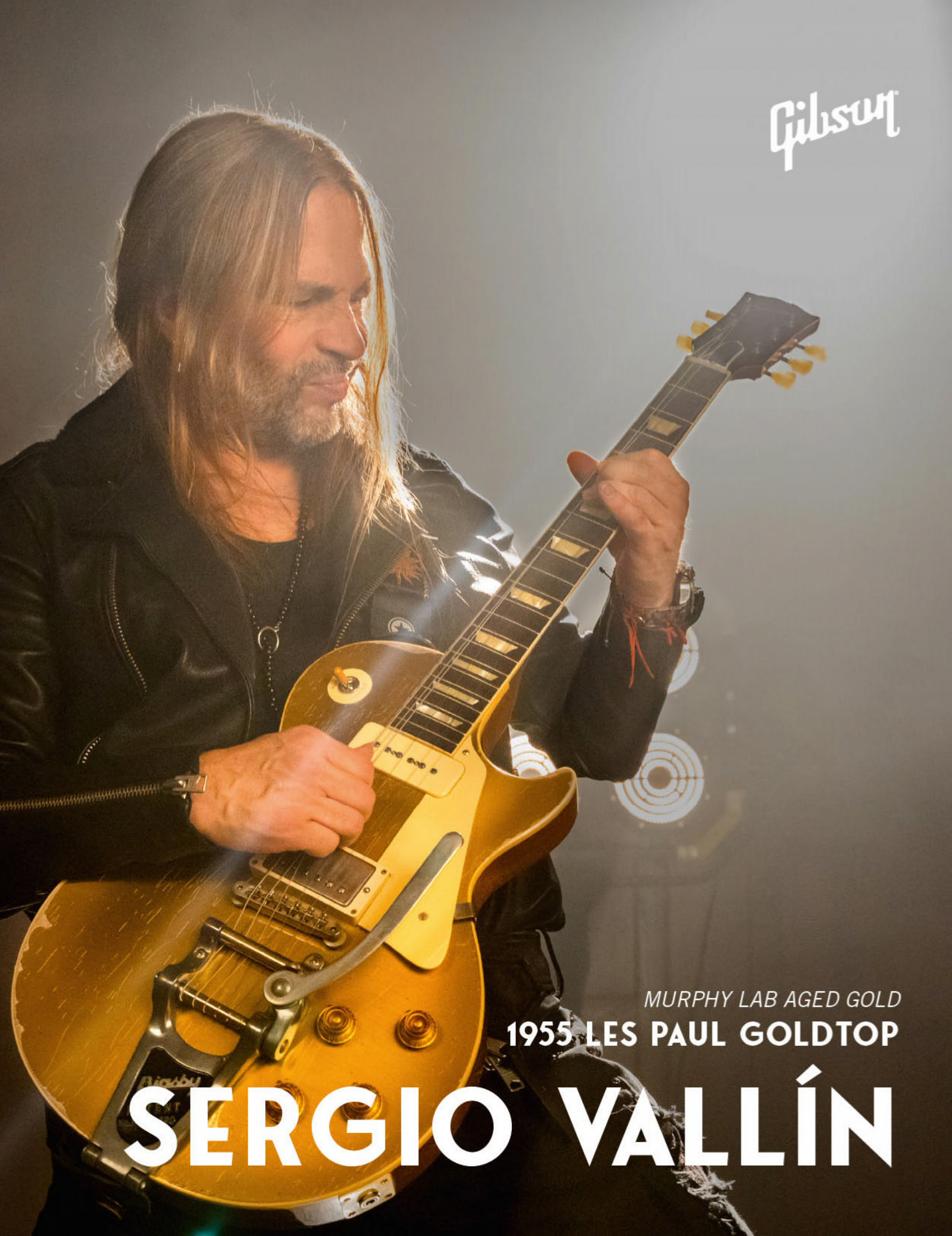


FIG. 16 tapping





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THE ARTIST'S WAY

STORY BY
CHRIS GILL

PHOTO BY
JEN ROSENSTEIN

THE UNSTOPPABLE RISE OF **IBANEZ** – THE IBANEZ THAT WE KNOW AND LOVE TODAY, THAT IS – STARTED **50 YEARS AGO**. BELOW, **CHRIS GILL** DELVES INTO THE FASCINATING TALE OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S TOP GUITAR BRANDS

"To be the first female Ibanez signature artist — that's what I've dreamed of since the very beginning"
— Nita Strauss (2019)

Nita Strauss with her signature Ibanez JIVA10, which was introduced in 2018

FIFTY YEARS AGO, ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1972, THE JAPANESE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MANUFACTURER HOSHINO OFFICIALLY FORMED A PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICA'S ELGER COMPANY TO SELL AND MARKET IBANEZ GUITARS IN THE UNITED STATES.

The ensuing collaboration was much more than an ordinary exporter/distributor relationship as the Japanese and Americans worked closely together, combining Hoshino's manufacturing skills and craftsmanship with Elger's expertise in selling instruments to American guitarists. As the partnership evolved and grew, Ibanez eventually became one of the world's most successful guitar brands, and the company still enjoys that status today.

The Ibanez story — as most of us know it — began that late-summer day at a European music trade show. However, the history of Ibanez guitars goes back much further than that. Hoshino Gakki Ten ("gakki ten" means "musical instrument company" in Japanese) started in 1908 when the Hoshino family decided to add a musical instrument department to its successful bookstore business. Interest in the guitar grew in Japan during the 1920s as the Hawaiian guitar craze reached Japan. Andres Segovia's first concert in Japan in 1929 further expanded demand. Fortunately, Hoshino had started importing Salvador Ibanez guitars from Spain that same year.

As Hoshino's business grew, the company became one of Japan's biggest exporters of musical instruments, particularly during the mid Sixties when Beatlemania led to a significant boom in guitar sales. The U.S. was one of the most lucrative markets for Ibanez guitars, but it was difficult and confusing to conduct business there due to a lack of centralized distribution. Instead, distribution was handled by several dozen different regional distributors, each with its own separate practices and procedures.

Yoshihiro Hoshino decided to make the highly controversial move of dealing with just one agent in the U.S. to handle distribution. The most logical candidate was the Elger Company, owned by Harry Rosenbloom, who had a retail store that sold Hoshino products and who also was an importer, distributor and manufacturer. Further sweetening the deal was Elger's strategic location in Bensalem, Pennsylvania, about 20 miles north of Philadelphia and close to several major highways that provided quick and easy access to major shipping ports, including Philadelphia, Baltimore, Newark and New York.

When Elger and Hoshino joined forces in 1972, the Ibanez guitar catalog resembled a "greatest hits" collection of America's most popular acoustic and electric guitars. The acoustics were basically reproductions of Martin and Gibson models, while the electric guitars and basses included copies of various Gibsons (Les Pauls, SGs, ES-175s, ES-335 and 355s, a late-Sixties style Flying V, plus EB and Les Paul Recording basses), Fenders (Strats, Teles, Jazzmasters, P- and J-basses), Ampeg lucite guitars and

FROM LEFT: ROBERT KNIGHT ARCHIVE/REDFERNS IBANEZ EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS

"I'm very fortunate in that whatever ridiculous ideas come into my head, the people at Ibanez can make them real"
— Steve Vai (2021)

Steve Vai, circa 2000, with a Multicolor Swirl take on his beloved signature JEM, the JEMY2KDNA

[*above*] Steve Miller with his Artist 2663TC in 1977. This model was part of the Artist line until 1978, when the Iceman name became official for guitars with this body shape

[*left*] Lari Basilio's signature LB1

basses, and Ampeg, Hofner and Rickenbacker solidbody basses. These guitars, built by Japan's Fujigen Gakki company, may not have been original designs, or even 100 percent accurate reproductions (for example, the Les Pauls had bolt-on necks), but they were very affordably priced and, perhaps more importantly, expertly set up by Elger's staff when they arrived in the States, which was an unheard of practice during the early Seventies.

Although Hoshino initially wanted Elger to set up and distribute its instruments, the Japanese partners grew receptive to the Americans' creative input and marketing ideas. Jeff Hasselberger, who started as an advertising consultant before becoming a full-time employee, and Hoshino executive Roy Miyahara were huge rock music fans, and their streetwise perspectives helped Hoshino develop guitars that were more in sync with current trends. Over the next few years, Ibanez continued to offer predominantly copies, but the models shifted toward reproductions of more desirable vintage models instead of mirror images of current production instruments. New original models also started to appear as Ibanez set its sights on establishing its own identity.

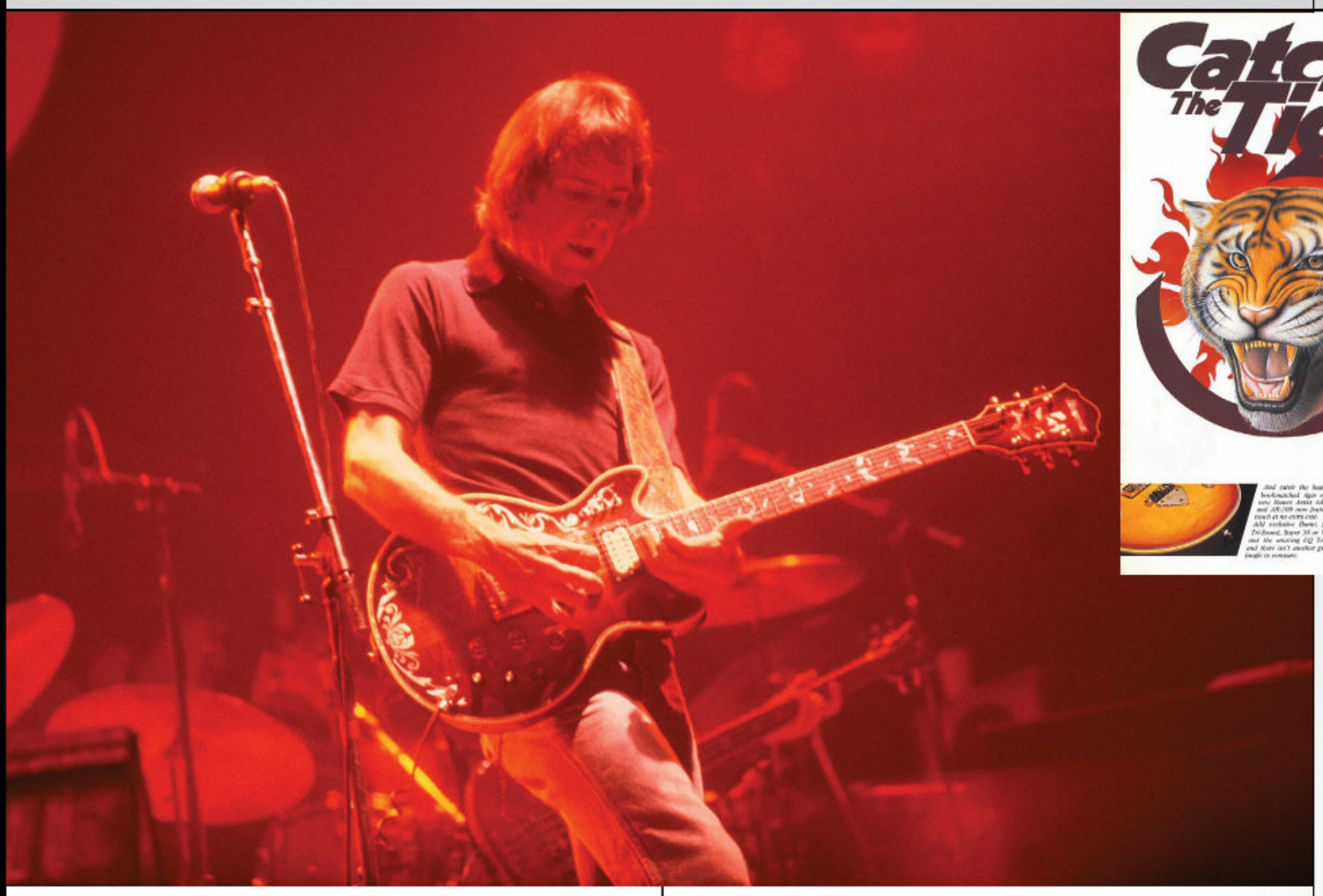
Ibanez gained significant momentum by 1975. Ibanez's excellent reproductions of Gibson's rare late-Fifties korina Flying V and Explorer models, which Ibanez named the Rocket Roll Sr. and Destroyer, respectively, grabbed the attention of many guitarists, including an up-and-coming guitarist named Eddie Van Halen, who used a Destroyer as one of his main guitars during 1975 through 1977, including the recording of about half of Van Halen's debut album. Paul Stanley of Kiss, Cub Koda of Brownsville Station, Syl Sylvain of the New York Dolls and both Tom Petty and Mike Campbell of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers played Ibanez's "korina" models (actually made of Japanese sen). Ibanez even offered a "copy" of the legendary korina Gibson Moderne, called the Futura, which Gibson never produced and previously only existed as a patent drawing.

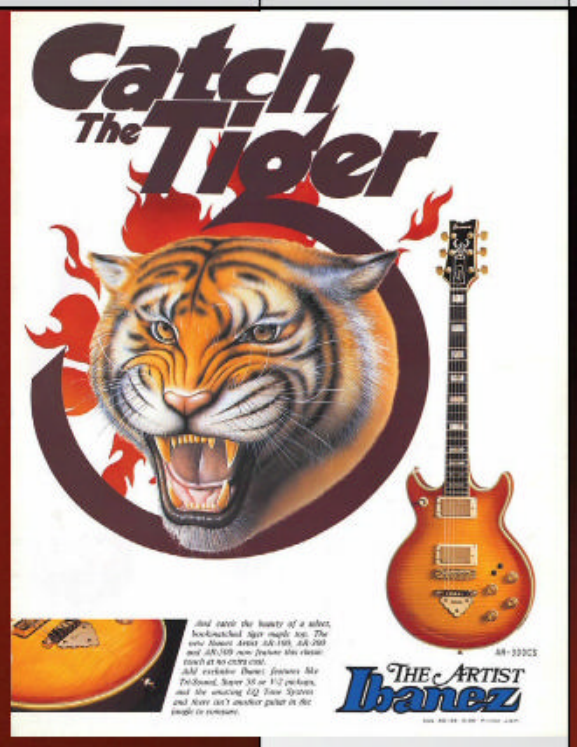
The company also significantly expanded its original "Artist" series models. The three 2663 models, featuring a very distinctive angular shape and arrowhead-style headstock shape, were particularly notable — a few years later this body style was renamed the Iceman. The Iceman also later became the basis for the popular Paul Stanley PS10 model. Steve Miller famously played a 2663TC (originally called the 2663-3P) with an unusual triple-coil pickup on his *Fly Like an Eagle* and *Book of Dreams* albums and supporting tours.

The Artist name was fitting, as Ibanez guitars were quickly being noticed by many significant players. Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead was the first artist to collaborate with Ibanez on a signature model, the 2680 and a fancier variation the 2681 Pro, which made its debut in 1975. George Benson was the second guitarist to develop an Ibanez signature model — the GB10, which made its debut in 1977. Ibanez and Benson have maintained a continuous relationship since then, offering a variety of hollowbody George Benson models over the years.

Ibanez representatives aggressively promoted the company's guitars and basses to artists during the mid Seventies to help spread the word about their instruments and solidify the brand's reputation for quality. Over the course of a few years, Ibanez went from featuring just one artist (Swedish jazz guitarist Rene Gustafsson) in its 1973 catalog to producing a special Professional catalog in 1976 that featured a different artist on each of its 12 pages, including Weir, Pat Simmons of the Doobie Brothers, Freddie Stone of Sly and the Family Stone, bassist Ronald LaPread of the Commodores, Carl Perkins, Randy Scruggs and more.

Ibanez's early focus on developing new models that evolved over time and forging solid relationships with artists set a template for the company's success that still remains a primary part of its practices today. By 1978 the direct copies were gone, and Ibanez promoted several original designs in its catalog, including the Artist, Musician, Concert, Performer and Iceman Series, along with George Benson, Paul Stanley and Bob Weir signature models. In tribute to how far the company had come, the statement, "Built by the proud craftsmen of Ibanez Japan" appeared on





The Grateful Dead's Bob Weir in Chicago with his 1976 Custom "Full Cowboy Fancy" model, November 18, 1978. Weir was the first artist to collaborate with Ibanez on a signature model, the 2680, and a fancier variation, the 2681 Pro, which made its debut in 1975

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the control cavity covers of several flagship models. Although Gibson raised an intellectual property dispute with Ibanez and several other Japanese companies the previous year to halt production of copies of the American manufacturer's designs, Ibanez was already several steps ahead of the competition, and its focus was now on being an innovator instead of an imitator.

"When the company started moving away from replica designs and found its own identity, that was an important period," says Ibanez Communications Specialist Scott Miller. "The people who designed early original Ibanez body shapes like the Iceman realized that the company didn't have that long-established legacy like Gibson had with the Les Paul or Fender had with the Strat, which players were very familiar with and kept coming back to. Ibanez didn't have that, so they had to innovate out of necessity. That sparked a mentality that has stuck with the company. Innovation and experimentation are very much a part of Ibanez's DNA."

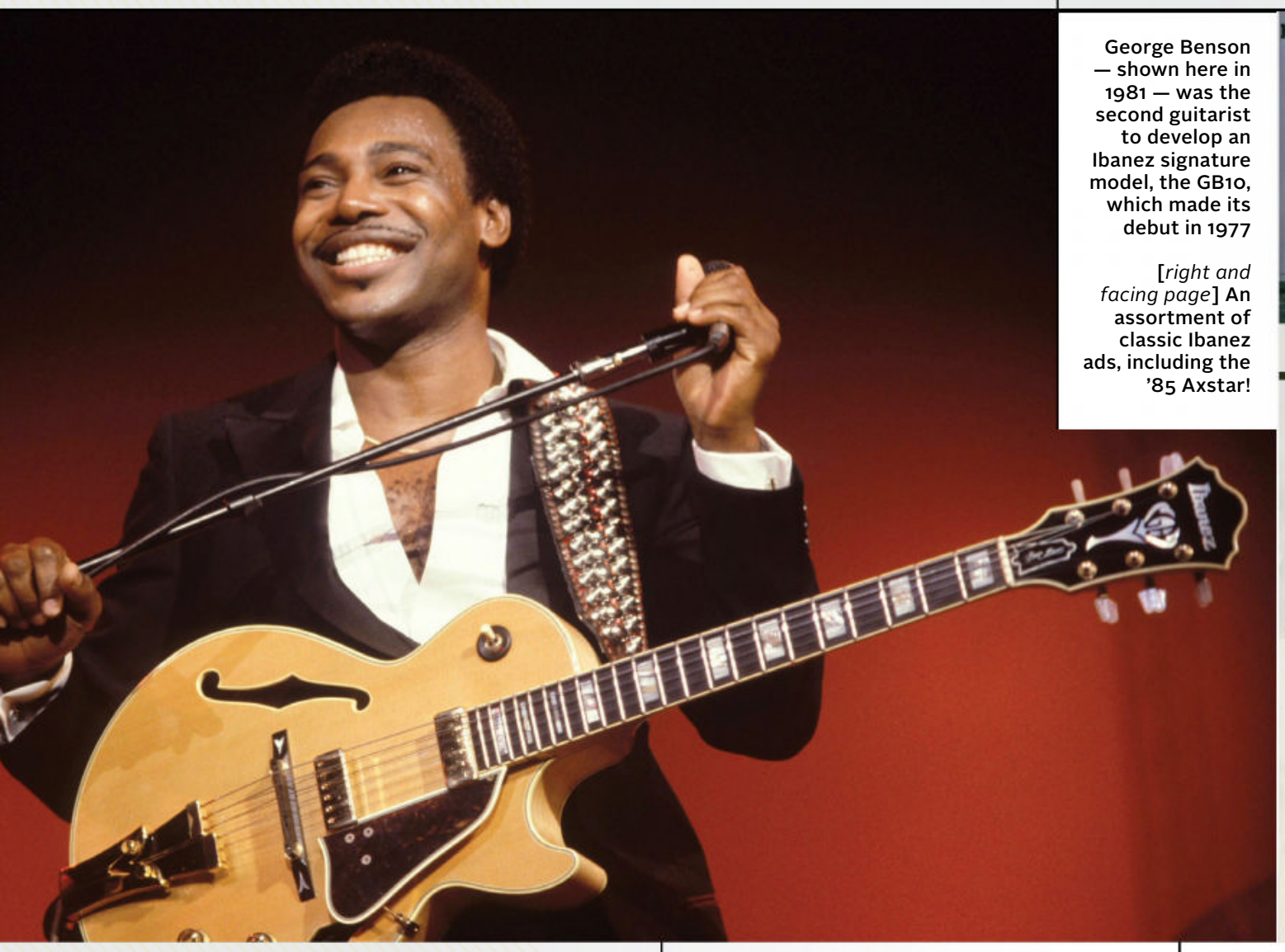
THE POWER AND THE PASSION

THE ELECTRIC GUITAR market became increasingly competitive during the early Eighties as a growing number of companies fought for market share. Ibanez maintained a competitive edge, thanks to its growing positive reputation, impressive artist roster and the breadth of its product line, which included everything from affordable entry-level instruments to stunning pro-quality guitars with unique features. Ibanez's guitar catalog was truly comprehensive, offering models like the Artist and Performer Series that went head-to-head with popular Gibson solidbodies, the Destroyer and Iceman Series for players who preferred eye-catching radical body shapes, the Musician Series with its versatile electronics and custom-style craftsmanship, and the Fender-style Blazer and Roadster/Roadstar Series.

Respected artists like Steve Lukather, Allan Holdsworth, Joe Pass, Lee Ritenour and Def Leppard's Phil Collen collaborated on signature models, and Ibanez guitars and basses were regularly sighted on stage in the hands of players that included Adrian Belew, Sting, Gary Moore and John Scofield. However, while Ibanez had assembled one of the most impressive artist rosters in the industry, the company struggled to compete with Kramer, which greatly benefitted from its relationship with Eddie Van Halen. Many up-and-coming hard rock and metal guitarists gravitated toward Kramer because of that, and Ibanez started to search for an artist association that could steal some of Kramer's thunder.

Ibanez was in the process of radically redesigning its product lineup during the mid Eighties when the company approached Steve Vai. Although Ibanez wasn't the only company courting the guitarist, Vai agreed to work with Ibanez, thanks to the company's desire to design an instrument from scratch rather than force him to use an already-existing model. The timing couldn't have been better, as Vai had just joined David Lee Roth's post-Van Halen band, which catapulted Vai from cult guitar hero to bona fide rock star.

The product of Vai's collaboration with Ibanez was the JEM777, which made its debut at the Winter NAMM Show in Anaheim, California, in 1987. Numerous companies were building hot-rodded "super Strats" at the time, which were inspired by Eddie Van Halen's "Frankenstein" guitar, but the JEM777 was like a sleek, sexy Lamborghini Countach, while the competitions' models were like a '57 Chevy street rod. Notable features included a deep cutaway that provided unrestricted access to all 24 frets, eye-catch-



George Benson — shown here in 1981 — was the second guitarist to develop an Ibanez signature model, the GB10, which made its debut in 1977

[*right and facing page*] An assortment of classic Ibanez ads, including the '85 Axstar!

ing day-glo finishes in hot pink, yellow and green, pink high-output custom DiMarzio pickups, Ibanez's outstanding Edge double-locking tremolo sitting in a routed "lion's claw" cavity that enabled radical rising pitch capabilities and a distinctive "monkey grip" cutout in the upper bass bout.

But the Steve Vai signature JEM777 wasn't the only trick up Ibanez's sleeve. At the same time the company introduced several radical new designs that similarly shook up the super Strat marketplace. This included the RG550, which had a similar body shape to the JEM model and the ultra-slim, fast-playing Wizard neck, several Roadstar II PRO540 models — the Saber, Radius and Power — which featured radical tapered and contoured body profiles, and the modernistic Maxxas model with its extreme sharp cutaway horn points, airfoil-style sculpted body contours, semi-hollow body design and revolutionary all-access neck joint with a slim, rounded heel and countersunk screws that eliminated the traditional neck plate. The Maxxas and Power models were short-lived, but the Saber, Radius and RG550's legacies live on today via Ibanez's S, Joe Satriani and RG models, respectively.

Vai's endorsement of Ibanez guitars led to a flood of new, highly talented guitarists joining forces with the company during the late Eighties, with notable artists including Paul Gilbert, Frank Gambale and Reb Beach, who all went on to develop signature models. The most significant addition to Ibanez's artist roster at this time was Joe Satriani, who was Vai's good friend and former guitar teacher. Satriani's endorsement was officially announced in January 1988. Once again, the timing was perfect as Satriani had just released his second instrumental album, *Surfing with the Alien*, which became a surprise hit reaching a peak of Number 29 on the *Billboard* 200 album chart and remaining on the chart for 75 weeks. Vai and Satriani became the leading figureheads of the instrumental shred guitar phenomenon, and their use of Ibanez guitars made Ibanez the go-to brand for thousands of aspiring shredders.

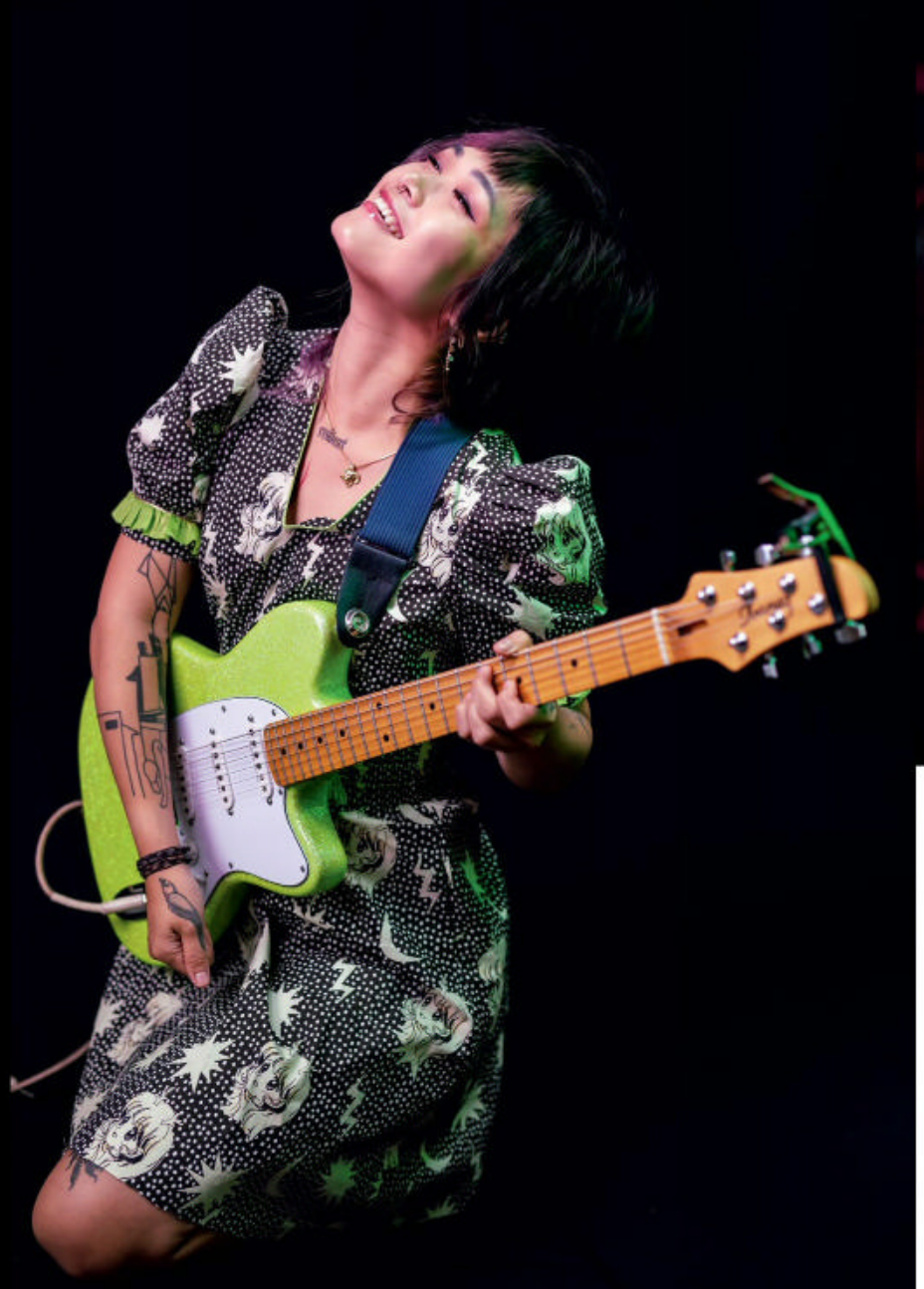
SHIFTING GEAR

IBANEZ ASCENDED TO status as one of the world's top guitar companies during the late Eighties, and that momentum continued during the beginning of the Nineties. Ibanez started assembling several models in America in 1988 and also opened a custom shop in Hollywood that same year to accommodate its growing artist roster. New models were released at a quick pace, but a few stalwart models like the Artist Series solidbody and semi-hollow guitars and George Benson signature hollowbodes showed that company had not forsaken its past.

Ibanez entered the Nineties with several bold statements, including the introduction of the JS Series Joe Satriani signature model guitars and the world's very first production seven-string solidbody electric, the Steve Vai Universe (UV77, UV7P and UV7). But although the Universe played an important role on Vai's highly successful instrumental album *Passion and Warfare*, released the same year, the model did not sell well initially and was discontinued by 1994.

Changing musical tastes precipitated by the incredible success of Nirvana's *Nevermind* album in early 1992 threatened to make Ibanez as *passé* as spandex tights and teased Aqua Net hairstyles. Seemingly overnight, interest in super Strat guitars with locking vibrato tailpieces plummeted. Many guitar companies struggled to adjust to the rapid change and a few went out of business. Thanks to Ibanez's ability to adapt and its history of developing new models, it took the company only a few years to respond with the Talman and Ghostrider Series, which made their debut in 1994 and sported features like lipstick-tube single-coil and vintage-output humbucking pickups.

In 1994, the same year Ibanez discontinued the seven-string Universe model, Korn released their debut album. Both of the band's guitarists, Munky and Head, played Universe models that they had bought cheap on the used market. However, instead of using the model for its intended shred styles, Korn employed the Universe's extended bass range to great effect on down-tuned rhythm parts. *Korn* went Gold in 1995, and as the band's popularity increased, so did demand from guitarists for seven-string models. Ibanez revived the Universe in 1996, and several more affordable RG series seven-strings followed suit in 1998 before Ibanez finally awarded Korn's contribution to the model's revival by issuing the K7 signature models in 2001.



Ibanez also officially revived the Iceman model in 1995, partially thanks to demand sparked by its use by J. Yuenger of White Zombie. J's signature model followed shortly after, along with a new Paul Stanley model that was released in time for Kiss's original lineup reunion tour. On a completely different end of the musical spectrum, Ibanez finally brought its long relationship with jazz guitarist Pat Metheny to fruition with the introduction of his first Ibanez signature model in 1996.

Although musical trends during the Nineties would suggest otherwise, Ibanez's RG, S and Steve Vai and Joe Satriani signature models continued to sell well during this period. As a result, they have retained a consistent presence and prominence in the Ibanez catalog every year and have become standards to several generations of players in much the same way as the Gibson Les Paul and Fender Stratocaster and Telecaster before them.

SCALING UP

AS IBANEZ ENTERED the new millennium, its status as one of the industry's top 10 guitar companies remained solid. Compared to most of its main competitors, Ibanez enjoyed a distinctive reputation as a company that was known both for offering new models and innovations as well as having a consistent lineup of standard models. The company also remained a magnet for new, upcoming generations of talent, continuing the company's legacy of developing new innovations through collaborations with visionary artists.

Although Ibanez started offering Prestige models during the mid Nineties, which were made by the company's best luthiers in Japan using premium-quality materials, refined neck designs and fret treatment, and pro hardware and pickups, the Prestige concept really took off in the early 2000s. The Prestige models adopted many new ideas and concepts suggested by players, and the series also offered customers the highly refined qualities of a boutique instrument for a fraction of the expense.

In 2007, Ibanez introduced the very first mass-produced eight-string solidbody electric model, the RG2228. The company's production of several different eight-string models over the years led to the Tosin Abasi series signature eight-string models, which the company offered from 2013 through 2017, when Abasi left to start his own guitar company. The company also produced an eight-string Meshuggah signature model, introduced in 2012. Further pushing the envelope of the guitar's tonal range, Ibanez's first nine-string models made their debut in 2015.

Ibanez introduced the Iron Label Series of guitars designed specifically for modern metal players in 2013. The company's first multi-scale guitars appeared in the Iron Label lineup in 2016. Ibanez's continuing dedication to modern, innovative instruments is reflected by the new Q (or Quest) Series, which feature a compact and ergonomically comfortable modernistic headless design and innovations like eight-degree inward slanted frets that enhance contemporary technical playing styles.

Today Ibanez offers electric solidbody signature models for 25 different artists that represent a wider variety of styles than ever, including punk guitarist Noodles of the Offspring, Nita Strauss, blues-rock virtuoso Josh Smith, Polyphia's Tim Henson, math rocker Yvette Young of Covet and modern jazz fusion specialist Tom Quayle. The Lari Basilio LB1 signature model is a surprising best seller considering that the Brazilian artist only broke through to a wider international audience over the last few years. Steve Vai models remain best sellers as well. His newest signature model, the PIA3761, exceeded projections to the extent that Ibanez had to stop taking orders as their production was unable to keep up with the demand.

"Artists are critically important to what we do," Miller says. "Our custom shop is like a player's laboratory, and artists are our direct line to what players really want and what is trending out there. They often give us critical feedback about what features work best for them in an instrument, which is information we'll consider when designing and manufacturing our production models."

Miller says that one of the keys to Ibanez's longevity and success is its willingness to adapt and constantly seek ways of doing things better. "New ideas are encouraged here," he explains, "whereas many other companies generally tend to work within solidly drawn lines. We're also not afraid to fail. There's a saying that goes, 'The master has failed more times than the beginner has tried.' Not all of our products have been successful, but when they're not we're not afraid to learn from the experience and move on. Fortunately, in the last five years we've had a lot more hits than misses. We truly pay attention to our artists and customers to deliver what musicians really want." GW

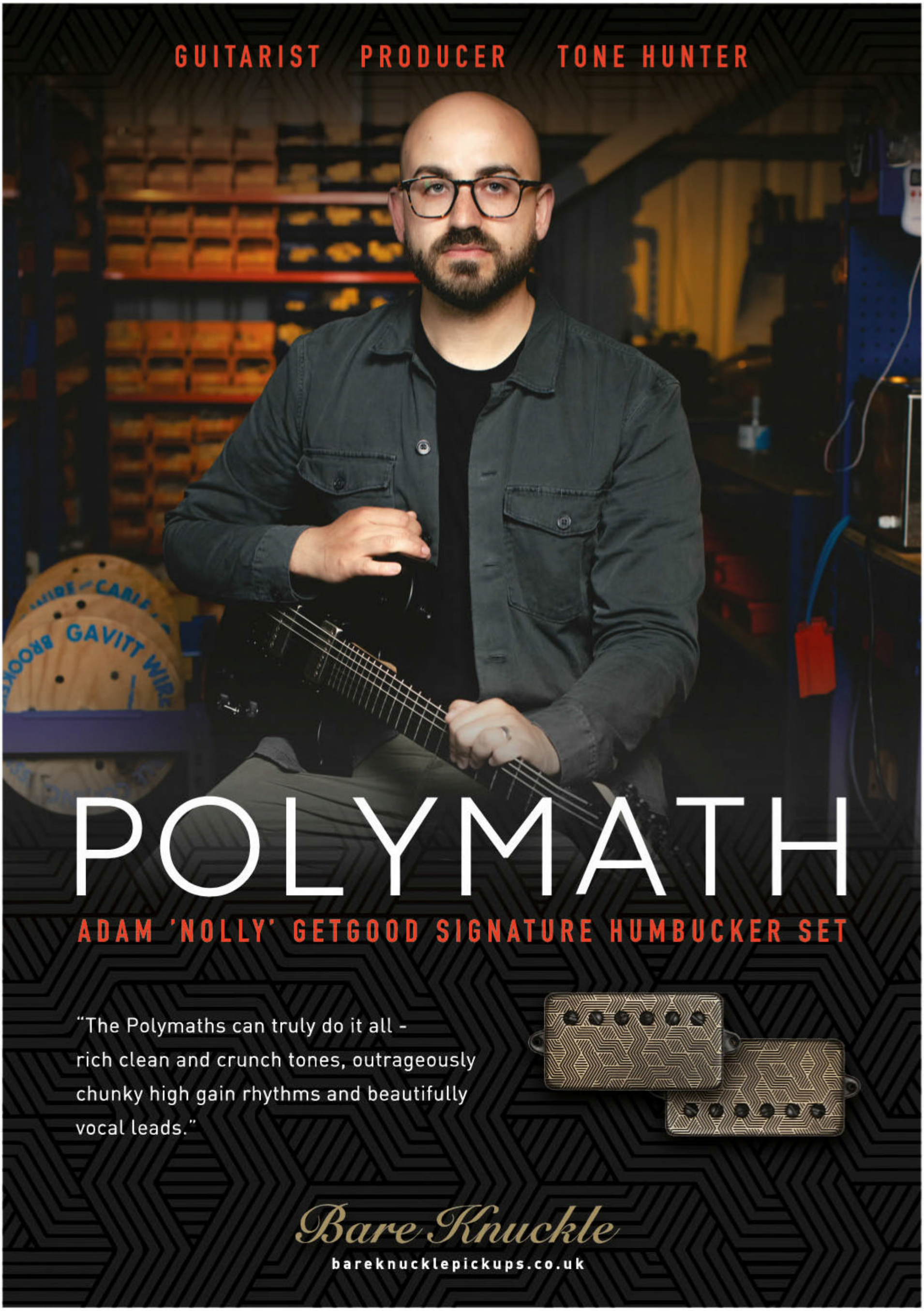
[*top left*] Covet's Yvette Young in 2020 with her signature YY10

[*top right*] Polyphia's Tim Henson with his signature THBB10

[*above*] An RG2228 eight-string in 2010

[*below*] An Iron Label RGIR27E seven-string in 2013

LEFT: HOWARD CHEN/FUTURE RIGHT: OLLY CURTIS/FUTURE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Ibanez

A SHREDDER'S DOZEN

TWELVE HIGHLIGHTS FROM IBANEZ'S REMARKABLE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CUSTOM SHOP COLLECTION

BY
AMIT SHARMA

LET'S FACE IT, THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF *ANYTHING* IS ALWAYS A GREAT CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION – WHICH IS EXACTLY WHY IBANEZ HAS GONE ABOVE AND BEYOND TO COMMEMORATE AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR HOSHINO USA'S FIVE DECADES IN THE GUITAR BUSINESS.

Fifty exclusive handcrafted electric and bass guitars have been produced, with the L.A. and Aichi Custom Shops joining forces to create some truly head-turning one-off instruments. If you're interested in exotic aesthetics, intricate designs, expansive electronics and highly unusual concepts, look no further.

"This was an idea that was formulated by our president Shogo Hayashi," says Ibanez Communications Specialist Scott Miller. "This company was launched back in 1972 to give Ibanez guitars a physical presence in the U.S. Obviously they'd been doing business here before that, but this is what allowed the company to take off and develop into what it is today. We wanted to commemorate that with something really special, something everyone would see and think, 'Wow, this is a *big* deal!'"

Though historically the two Custom Shops have worked independently from one another, the idea of partnering up for something extra special felt like a great way of dreaming up the impossible. Which is precisely what they did.

"The principal thing with our Japan Custom Shop is that they're our prototypers," Miller says. "They're the idea guys who work out which thoughts we have in meetings can work on a production scale or not. Because that's where we meet our customers — in production rather than custom shop spaces. In L.A., the focus is more on the artists, so when an artist has an idea or concept that we can't provide in our production series, that's where they go. They make the very best, stage-ready performers' guitars. Our Japan shop is more about R&D and experimental instruments. It's more about 'what could we do?' rather than taking what we know and executing it. Hoshino USA was the intersection of it, coordinating all the images and specs and getting all the content ready from both custom shops."

Below, Miller gives us a closer look at 12 of the most striking models in this year's anniversary series.

LACS5

"ROOT BEER FLOAT"

Specs: *A mahogany body Iceman with a Transparent Root Beer Burst-finished flamed maple top, a set three-piece maple/korina neck, a maple fingerboard and two DiMarzio PAF 36th Anniversary humbuckers.*

"I had a chance to go out to L.A. in the very early stages to check out the instruments. This is one we were all drawn to. Even the guys in Japan were like, 'Wow, that's seriously amazing!' It's not a super-conceptual or experimental piece or over the top in terms of specs; obviously, some of the Japanese models had things like metal tops and crazy sculpting. This one seemed to hammer home the classic Ibanez elements, distilling the core of Ibanez to its purest form."

LACS18

"HANG 10"

Specs: *An alder body and three-piece maple/purpleheart neck-thru Talman, with a quilted maple top in Turquoise Blue Stain Gloss and a trio of Seymour Duncan Strat Lipstick pickups.*

"This is another one we all knew would stand out immediately. Tak Hosono, who is the manager of the L.A. custom shop and head luthier over there, was very happy with how this one came out. What I love about this guitar — and its sister model, which is the red Talman named 'Muffins' — is how it sticks to the original quirkiness of the shape but has this completely different look because of the figured top and pickguard taken on it. I think it's a more modern take on that body shape, which really changes how it behaves visually, which I found really fascinating."

JPCS3

"WIND SHEAR"

Specs: *An all-flamed maple construction in Transparent Blue featuring drastic hand-carved, weight-relieving body cuts, an Edge tremolo bridge and DiMarzio Air Norton and The Tone Zone humbuckers.*

"This one has an aerodynamic theme to it and looking at it you can probably tell it is more of a conceptual piece. We wanted to push the S model to its absolute extreme, because they are already pretty light to begin with. So the idea was to take that even further and give it some relief cuts. They could have just scalloped it from the front and back, but no, they went *all* the way through. There are physical cuts through the entire body, so it's a very nimble, lightweight and fast guitar — both thematically and from a playability standpoint. It looks seriously amazing because of the figured maple that was used."

JPCS21

"JADE MANTIS"

Specs: **Specs**: *An African mahogany-bodied RG570 with a figured maple top and birdseye maple fingerboard, plus a Lo-Pro Edge bridge and DiMarzio Air Norton, True Velvet and The Tone Zone pickups.*

"This is a really interesting design, taken from a very limited series of J Customs we released as an exclusive for Europe. One of the main draws to the guitar was the gradation finish, which is where the name comes from. It runs through the entire fingerboard for a really seamless look. This was one of our Japanese custom shop models; they felt it would be cool to bring this one back and have it available for the U.S. market. African mahogany is also less common for us — though mahogany does make an appearance here and there on the higher level RGs, like the 5000 Prestige series."

JPCS2

"RG-GT"

Specs: *A carbon fiber top, back and sides (as well as a carbon fiber headstock) complimented by a Lo-Pro Edge 7 bridge and the DiMarzio Blaze H-S-H pickup set.*

"It's a carbon fiber top and rear cap, though the center of the body is actually made out of alder. So it will still give you a very expressive, natural and organic sound. This felt like a cool way of giving someone a traditional Ibanez tone while still being able to offer the super-modern carbon fiber look. The name ties in with what the builder was thinking, because the builder is actually a huge fan of motorsports and Formula One. It came out perfect, in that sense!"

JPCS20

"CALDERA"

Specs: *An ash-bodied RG with a figured koa top, an ebony fingerboard, a Lo-Pro Edge bridge and DiMarzio Air Norton, True Velvet and The Tone Zone pickups.*

"So, this isn't a Steve Vai model because there's no monkey grip or anything. We have occasionally used the Tree of Life [*inlay*] on other instruments that aren't Vai models, like J Customs. We kinda tweaked that design for a couple of these new guitars, making each one slightly different to better fit the theme. On this one, it ties in with the mother of pearl resin to play off the look of the pickguard."

JPCS7

"RANGE FINDER"

Specs: *A seven-string version of the limited-run RG550XH from 2011, featuring an alder body, a flamed maple and walnut top, a Lo-Pro Edge 7 bridge and DiMarzio Blaze-S/Evolution 7 pickups.*

"There was a 30-fret six-string we put out a number of years ago. Having that additional string for this one added to the range potential and functionality of the guitar. One thing that's important to mention is that you'll see how far the fretboard shoots into the body. It looks like you're losing a pickup, but actually there's a small preamp module with a preset EQ curve built into the guitar. And it's the bridge pickup that provides a neck pickup kind of sound, engaging the preamp module on two positions of the five-way switch. It scoops the sound and boosts the bass to give you a simulated neck pickup, which is a very cool feature!"

LACS9

"ECHO"

Specs: *An RG8 in Transparent Teal Gloss with a white mahogany body, a quilted maple top, a five-piece roasted maple neck and a pair of DiMarzio Ionizer pickups.*

"This is a very impressive guitar for a number of reasons, the Tree of Life inlay being one of them. If you look closely, you'll notice a wider spread than a typical one. They could have just done a standard one running through the center, narrower than the neck itself, but they modified it so the vines run deeper across the neck and fills it out. Like with the 'Range Finder,' it has something special that you can't quite see right away — the wings of the guitar are fully hollowed out. So it's the lightest eight-string I've ever picked up... I believe it only weighs seven and a half pounds."

LACS15

"BIG RIG"

Specs: *An alder-bodied RGA8 featuring a flamed maple top, a three-piece maple/purpleheart neck, a Gibraltar Std. II bridge and EMG 66H/57H pickups.*

"This eight-string is not quite as lightweight, with a fully solid body. While some guitars have very interesting features buried underneath the surface, I'd say this is more of a surface-level instrument. The finish was custom mixed by our painter in the L.A. custom shop, Aaron Stone. He worked with his paint supplier for something extra special. This guitar also has a sister seven-string model called 'Slick' that has this Arctic Oil Spill finish. The cool thing about the 'Big Rig' is the chameleon finish on the edges that fade out into a transparent finish along the top. The maple top is subtle, you can the maple every so slightly because it has some black stain to accent and highlight it. There's a lot going on with the finish on this instrument."

JPCS8

"TOTALLY JAZZED"

Specs: *An AF model with a multi-scale construction, featuring a solid flamed maple body, back and sides with a spruce top, an ebony fingerboard and a single Bartolini 1C Humbucker.*

"I'm really into the two hollowbodies we made. There's this 'Totally Jazzed' one as well as a 'Totally Jammin" model. They're both really fascinating because I've never seen a multi-scale construction used on a build like that. And the multi-scale is pretty subtle, only about an inch spread on each, blending in the traditional elements of an archtop with the modern flair you get from multi-scales. As you might have guessed, there are a lot of cousin and sister builds in this collection, like the JPCS16 'Sunset' and the JPCS17 'Sunrise,' which share very unique finishes."

JPCS1

"SOLAR FLARE"

Specs: *An alder-bodied RG with a stainless steel top, a five-piece maple/walnut neck, a Lo-Pro Edge bridge and DiMarzio Evolution H-S-H pickups.*

"Technically it's not just a finish! The 'Solar Flare' actually has a metal top that's *glued* on top of the wood. The luthier then took an angle rider and hand cut that pattern into the top. I have to say, it's definitely one of the most eye-catching guitars in this collection."

JPCS14

"ASTERISK"

Specs: *An alder-bodied AZ fitted with a S-Tech roasted flamed maple neck – which has a thicker Fat AZ Oval C profile — as well as Y.O.S. Smoggy pickups.*

"To give more balance we also wanted to offer stuff that's more vintage-looking, as well as the more experimental and modern instruments. One thing that's interesting about the 'Asterisk' is its name — the reason we called it that was because the original AZ project codename was Asterisk. That's how we referred to it when designing the original prototypes. For this guitar, as well as its sister build, which we called 'The Old Guard,' we used nitrocellulose for that classic vintage finish. The Asterisk has one humbucker with two single-coils, plus a dyna-MIX 9 switch, while The Old Guard just has three single-coils. Both feature a flame maple neck, so they still have that high-end custom shop look, just done subtly." GW

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the gear in review

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Rat Licker Distortion

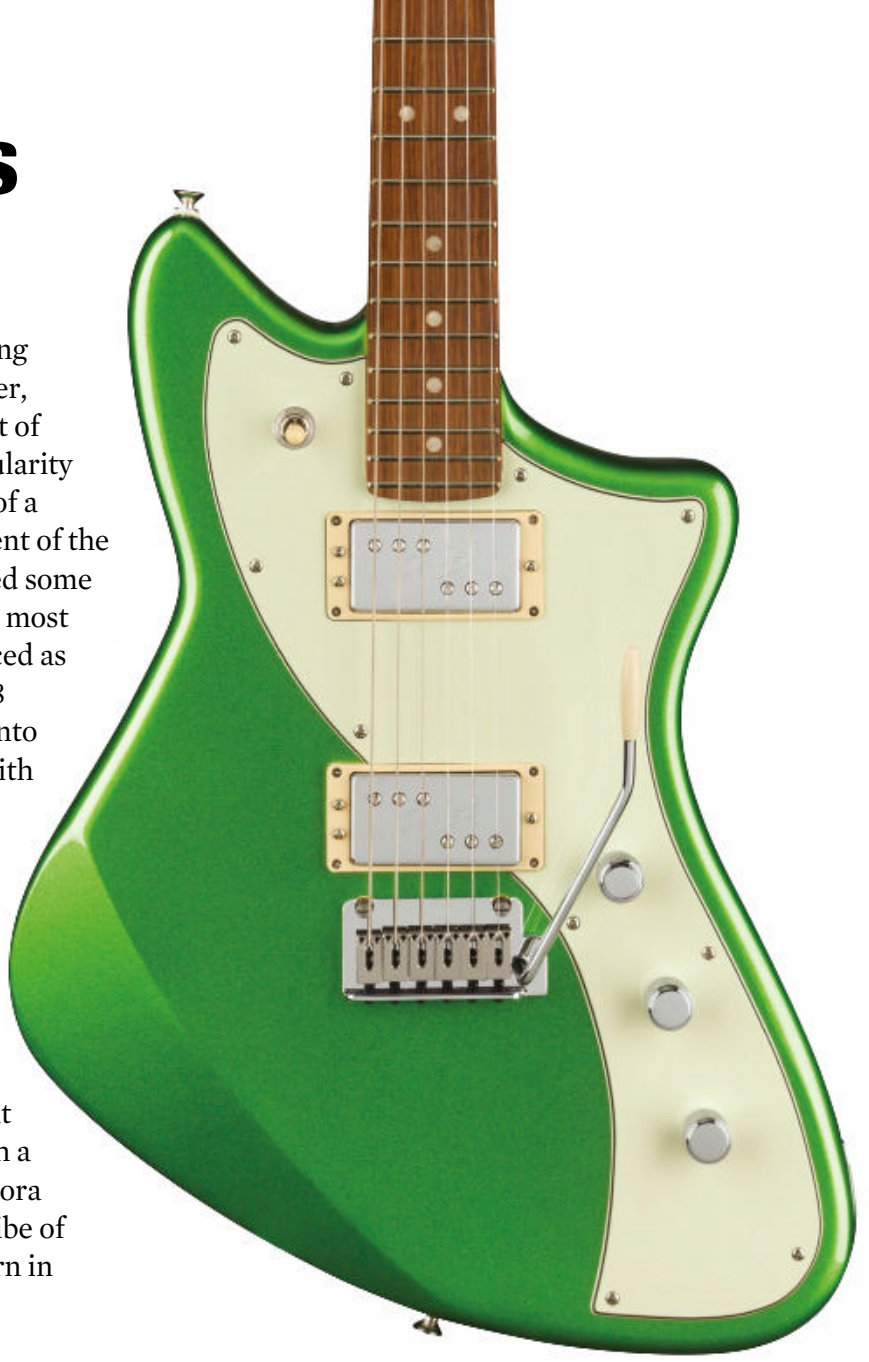
Radical Roots

FENDER PLAYER PLUS METEORA HH

By Chris Gill

FENDER COULD PROBABLY do fine just offering variations of its four core models (the Telecaster, Stratocaster, Jazzmaster and Jaguar), the most recent of which was introduced 60 years ago in 1962. The popularity of those perennials seems like it would make the job of a guitar designer at Fender the music industry equivalent of the Maytag repairman, but actually Fender has introduced some very cool new models over the years. One of Fender's most recent successful ventures was the Meteora, introduced as part of their Parallel Universe Collection back in 2018 with a Tele-style pickup configuration and evolving into the limited-edition Alternate Reality series version with dual humbuckers and string-thru-body tailpiece in 2019.

The Meteora's radical offset body design proved to be a success, so it's back again a third time as an affordable Player Plus series model, with a few changes that promise to make it the most desirable Meteora yet. Like the previous version, the dual-humbucker format remains but the tuneomatic-style bridge is replaced by a two-point vibrato. Combining several classic style elements with a forward-looking design, the Fender Player Plus Meteora is a great choice for guitarists who love the feel and vibe of a Fender but want something bolder and more modern in terms of looks and sound.



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- The radical sweep, angular body design provides several advantages, including outstanding balance and unrestricted access to the uppermost frets.
- The Fireball humbuckers have the classic zig-zag pole piece screws and stamped logo of Seventies Seth Lover Wide Range pickups but with an entirely new voice.
- An S-1 switch inset in the master volume control makes it easy to quickly switch to split-coil tones with the press of a button.
- The two-point synchronized tremolo and locking tuners allow guitarists to perform aggressive whammy bends and deep dives without going out of tune.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** The Fender Player Plus Meteora is by far the coolest version of the Meteora yet, providing a bold, distinctive voice, expressive vibrato system and eye-catching looks.

FEATURES Several classic-style visual features give the Meteora a bit of a time-warp vibe, but under the hood it's truly a modern instrument. The headstock logo, with its "spaghetti" Fender logo and "cresting wave" filigrees is inspired by the early Sixties Jaguar; the headstock is the large late Sixties/Seventies shape; and the humbuckers have the zig-zag polepiece screw configuration and stamped Fender logo like the Seth Lover Wide-Range pickups from the Seventies (but are entirely new models). However, the neck has a slim Modern "C" profile, flat 12-inch radius fingerboard with rolled edges and 22 medium jumbo frets, and the pickups are a pair of Fireball humbuckers with medium output (our example measured 7.43k Ohms at the bridge and 7.00k Ohms at the neck).

While the Alternative Reality Meteora had an innovative switch that swapped the placement of two individual volume controls for the humbuckers (its third control was master tone), the Player Plus Meteora opts for a more useful control configuration (IMHO) consisting of a master volume with inset S-1 coil-split switch and individual tone controls for each pickup. The three-way pickup selector offers the usual bridge/both/neck settings. Hardware includes a two-point synchronized tremolo with brushed steel block saddles, nickel/chrome-plated knurled flat-top metal control knobs and deluxe cast/sealed locking tuners with short posts.

The tonewood formula remains classic Fender, consisting of an alder body and maple neck. Meteora models with the Belair Blue or Cosmic Jade finish have a pau ferro fingerboard, while the Three-Color Sunburst and Silverburst examples have maple fingerboards. Thanks to a generous offset sweep angle that provides extra body mass in the lower treble bout, the Player Plus Meteora is slightly heavier than an average Strat — our example weighed a little over 8 ½ pounds.

PERFORMANCE The Player Plus Meteora may have dual humbuckers like a thousand other models out there today, but the medium-output pickups and radical body dimensions help it deliver a distinctive voice with an attractive treble brilliance, responsive attack and full body. The guitar sounds impressively lively with low-gain clean amp settings, and it retains desirable clarity, bite and articulation when pushed to high-gain extremes. The coil-split switch delivers attractive single-coil tones that are like a hot rodded Tele.

The Meteora's body shape is designed for function as well as modern eye-catching form. The treble bout cutaway provides unrestricted access to the uppermost frets, and the lower treble bout extension keeps the body comfortably balanced without neck dives when playing in a standing position. Although the vibrato doesn't have a locking design, it can perform very deep, aggressive dives and remain perfectly in tune. I found the two tone controls a much more useful option than the previous control configuration as I often switch between the full-treble crunch of the bridge pickup and "woman" tones on the neck pickup with the tone control rolled back. The changes to the third iteration of the Meteora makes the model a bona fide hard rock/metal machine, which is appropriate for a solidbody with its radical curves and angles.

Original Gangster

PEAVEY HP 2

By Chris Gill

THE ORIGINAL PEAVEY Wolfgang model, developed by and for Eddie Van Halen in 1995 and discontinued in 2004 when Ed left Peavey to start his own EVH brand, was one of the Mississippi company's biggest successes. That success continued when the model immediately re-emerged afterwards as the HP 2, with HP paying tribute to the company's founder Hartley Peavey. After a brief hiatus from the market, Peavey resurrected the HP 2 in 2017 only to run into production challenges at its USA factory in 2019. In late 2020 the company announced that production resumed, but now the HP 2 was being built in Europe. Demand for the model has been so high that it took us nearly two years to get one for review, but rest assured it was worth the wait.

FEATURES The specs of the new HP 2 remain consistent with the original iteration, including a generously thick, carved, figured maple top over a basswood back and select single-piece birdseye maple neck and slab fingerboard. The neck is bolted to the body at a sculpted neck heel with no neck plate, and its specs include a 25 ½-inch scale, 15-inch radius, 22 medium frets, 1 5/8-inch nut width, truss rod adjustment wheel inset above the 22nd fret and oil finish. The maple top on our Tigereye example had exquisite flame figuring, tastefully complemented by single-layer cream binding, while the basswood back was finished in black.

The electronics consist of Peavey-designed zebra-coil high-output humbuckers (the measured resistances on our example were 15.07k Ohms bridge/12.84k Ohms neck) that are mounted directly to the body, master volume and master tone controls each with push/pull switches to engage coil tapping for the pickups individually, and a Switchcraft three-way pickup selector toggle switch (bridge/both/middle) and ¼-inch side-mounted output jack. Hardware includes a Peavey-licensed chrome-plated Floyd Rose double-locking tremolo, a six-string retainer bar on the headstock and Schaller mini tuners with pearloid buttons.

PERFORMANCE It only takes a few seconds of playing the HP 2 to realize why so many players are still huge, dedicated fans of this model. Playability is top-notch, with the new factory paying the same meticulous attention to detail that results in a very comfortable feel and exquisite playability, with the fretwork being particularly noteworthy. The neck feels exceptionally solid and stable, and the oil finish provides a just-right balance between rock-steady resistance and smoothness to facilitate runs up and down the neck.

The humbuckers are expertly dialed in to deliver outstanding tone with highly detailed definition, expressive midrange, crispy upper harmonics and robust bass that is tight, punchy and percussive. The HP 2 sounds like a beast when played through an amp adjusted to high-gain distortion, but it sounds equally impressive when played with clean settings, delivering full-bodied tone with an alluring treble sparkle. With the coil-split settings engaged, the pickups produce genuine single-coil tones with attractive spank and twang, with the neck pickup sounding like a Strat and the bridge pickup resembling a Tele. My only beef is that the skirted top-hat knobs can make it difficult to engage the coil-split setting.

There are a few notable differences between the HP 2 and the original Wolfgang. The Floyd Rose bridge does not feature a D-Tuna, and it is also set up in a floating configuration with a body cavity that allows players to pull the bar up, instead of being mounted flush to the body. For many players the latter is a bonus, as it enables hummingbird flutter tricks, pedal steel licks and other whammy shenanigans.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $2,499.99
MANUFACTURER: Peavey, peavey.com

- The Peavey-designed humbucking pickups are treated with a two-step wax dipping process that eliminates microphonic feedback even at extreme volume levels.
- The master volume and master tone controls have a push/pull coil-tap switch that allows guitarists to split the coils of each humbucker individually.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE** After a hiatus, the Peavey HP 2 is back and as good as it ever was, with expressive high-gain pickups, a comfortable, highly playable design and first-class construction and materials.

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

Orange Blossom

GRETSCH G5422TG ELECTROMATIC

By Paul Riario

PLAYING A GRETSCH requires a great deal of commitment. I say this because chances are, your electric leanings have primarily been solid-body choices, and Gretsch guitars are predominantly hollow bodies, which often requires some finessing of your amp's tone if you've ever switched between the two. But that isn't a condemnation nor a dissuasion, because if you've never experienced the joy of that primal "Gretsch Sound" roaring through an amp, you just don't know what you're missing. The only problem for those of us who have an itch for a Gretsch has always been their typically out-of-reach prices for their most prestigious hollow body models. But behind the scenes, Gretsch has assiduously revamped their Electromatic collection of instruments, making them not only more robust and player-friendly but, more importantly, temptingly affordable.

The new collection of Electromatics includes a slew of Classic Hollow Bodies, a Jet BT, Jet Baritone, a short-scale Junior Jet II bass and even a Lap Steel, all in wildly cool and arresting finishes. For this review, I was able to strap on the lovely Gretsch G5422TG Electromatic Classic Hollow Body Double-Cut with Bigsby and Gold Hardware, which verbosely tells you the kind of Gretsch it is, but even so, I can succinctly say this guitar is destined to become your next favorite model.

FEATURES Simply looking at the G5422TG, it's abundantly clear that Gretsch made great strides in refreshing their mid-tier Electromatics — so much so, that one must wonder whether it comes as a detriment to their top-of-the-line Professional series. But that aside, it says a lot about the construction of this hollow-body instrument; because the G5422TG feels quite solid and substantial once it's in your hands, and you can see how Gretsch pays homage to original Fifties and Sixties designs with the guitar's newly refined arch contours and vintage-inspired shape on its double-cutaway laminated maple body. The updated trestle block bracing under the hood noticeably increases sustain (even when unplugged), reduces feedback and makes the guitar respond closer to a solid body while retaining all the vibrant qualities of a hollow body. The classic "C"-profile maple neck has a pleasantly comfy shape and features a 12–inch radius laurel fingerboard with Gretsch's signature Pearloid hump block inlays. Other notable upgrades and refinements include Gretsch's brand new FT-5E Filter'Tron pickups, a master volume with treble bleed circuit, master tone, individual pickup volume controls for bridge and neck and three-position pickup toggle switch, a smaller late-Fifties G6120 bound headstock and vintage-style open-back tuning machines, a Graph Tech NuBone nut, Bigsby B60 vibrato tailpiece, and an Adjusto-Matic bridge with secured laurel base. Finally, this model comes in Orange Stain, Snowcrest White (a left-handed version is available only in this color) and Walnut Stain finish.

PERFORMANCE There was a time not long ago when I'd point to an Electromatic as an affordable alternative to its Gretsch counterpart, but now, I can no longer in good faith do that, because this G5422TG Electromatic is so spot-on in its overall build and tone that if you've ever toyed with the idea of a having a Gretsch in your arsenal, now might be the time to grab one. Having the combination of the guitar's condensed 24.6–inch scale length and super flat 12–inch radius fingerboard

contributes to its inviting playability, and I can't help but be enthralled over the bounce of the springy Bigsby B60, which stays remarkably in-tune for subtle vibrato. The piercing looks of its bold orange stain finish radiates a great deal of rockabilly vibe when you're ready to take that Gretsch twang live, but I can also counter that you'd have no problem playing power metal on this hollow body thanks to its rock-solid trestle block bracing, which firmly keeps the guitar from feeling as if it'll burst apart if you pump too much gain through it. Speaking of which, once you do get to that seriously overdriven or higher gain territory using it, the FT-5E Filter'Tron pickups along with its treble bleed circuit deftly emit that one-two punch of Gretsch snarl and buzz-saw roar with brilliant clarity. But if you're reading this, you will most likely use this guitar for more nuanced and jazzy textural tones, and if that's the case, the G5422TG Electromatic delivers the tonal goods with smooth response and a soft shimmer, which is the primary reason many players (including yours truly) gravitate toward a Gretsch for these deeply satisfying tones.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $799.99
MANUFACTURER:
Gretsch, gretschguitars.com

- The new FT-5E Filter'Tron pickups usher in booming clarity and brightness without muddiness, while offering blistering snarl and snap when overdriven.
- All-new trestle block bracing underneath the bridge offers unmitigated stability, enhanced feedback resistance, firm bass response and punchy top-end attack.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
The G5422TG Electromatic is a super-charged Gretsch with snappy playability, solid construction, and plucky Filter'Tron pickups to unleash a massive roar.

GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

Buzz Bin
Utech Records Rat Licker Distortion

SOME OF THE most memorable pedal launches have been ones that are collaborations between pedal builders and artists. Recently, EarthQuaker Devices partnered with Boris guitarist Wata for the Hizumitas, a sonic replica of her beloved Elk BM Sustainar, a rare and mind-numbing fuzz. And on a broader scale, MXR teamed up with RATM's Tom Morello for the Power 50 Overdrive, a pedal that aims to recreate the preamp sound of his one-and-only Marshall JCM800. And while there are plenty more to list, let's just say I like to be made aware of the lesser-known collaborative releases — especially from those on the fringes of the indie scene. One fine example is the Utech Records Rat Licker Distortion, a bare-bones recreation of the beloved Pro Co Rat circuit in a stompbox, made all the more legit with the illegible "doom metal logo" rat graphic on its face.

Utech Records is an independent record label based in Milwaukee, where owner and operator Keith Utech has released more than 180 titles worldwide. The Rat Licker Distortion is a joint effort between Utech and Otto (an avid Rat pedal enthusiast) from the Dead Neanderthals on Utech's label, and Matt Shea at IdiotBox Effects, who designed and hand-wired the pedal. Otto wanted an uncomplicated single-knob pedal that delivered the heavily saturated and sludgy distortion of the Pro Co Rat. And for sure, the Rat Licker is about as straightforward as you can get with a soft-click footswitch that turns the pedal on and off, and a blend knob that allows you to add the Rat Licker's distortion incrementally to your input signal. So, obviously, you must be wondering, "That's it?" Well, no. The idea of the pedal was to be a "set and forget" stompbox, so for the tweakers, Shea embedded the necessary Rat controls (Distortion/Filter/Volume) as three internal trimpots along with one trimpot (Direct) to boost the input signal on the inside of the pedal. For its distinct tone, the Rat Licker uses LM308 and TL072 chips on its PCB board and features true bypass switching.

Utech notes the Rat Licker was inspired by the "distortion-drenched sound of the Dead Neanderthals' *Blood Rite* EP," and honestly, if you need a good idea of what this pedal sounds like, give that record a spin. The Rat Licker nails the Pro Co Rat's familiar shaggy distortion with fuzzy overtones, but what's more, its overwhelming wall-of-sludge saturation will undoubtedly appeal to bassists and guitarists who dabble in doom metal or drone rock, and avant-garde noise purveyors. The Rat Licker is already on its third production run, so snatch up one of these rodent boxes to add some much-deserved filth to your tone. — *Paul Riario*

STREET PRICE: $119
MANUFACTURER: Utech Records, utechrecords.com

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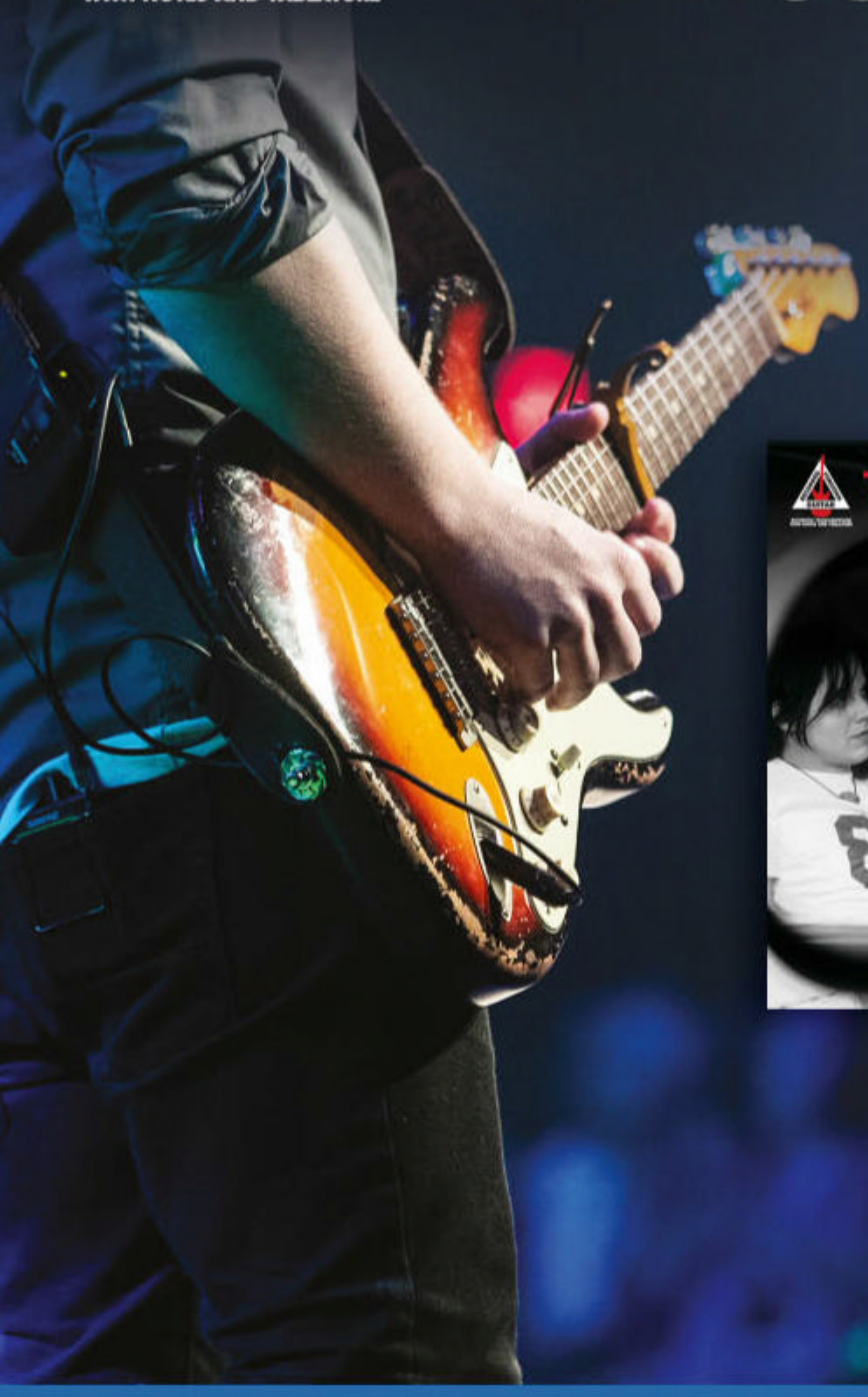

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IN DEEP

by Andy Aledort

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2022

STANDARD PROCEDURE

Slide in standard tuning, and how to play "Light of Love," part 2

LAST MONTH, WE looked at the primary fingerpicked acoustic rhythm parts to "Light of Love," the title track from my new double album. I'll now will demonstrate how to play the song's intro and primary slide guitar solos.

I play the slide parts in "Light of Love" in standard tuning, which is a less common approach than using an open tuning for slide work. Slide masters such as Duane Allman, Johnny Winter, Bonnie Raitt, Ry Cooder, Derek Trucks and Lowell George tune to an open chord, such as E, D, G or A, for virtually all of their slide performances.

Virtuoso slide guitarist Warren Haynes, however, most often opts to play slide in standard tuning. He once told me that one of the reasons he acclimated to playing slide in standard was that, during his time playing alongside Dickey Betts in the Allman Brothers Band, it was easiest for him to stick with slide in standard tuning when the live set lists were constantly decided on the fly. This way, he was always "ready to go." I experienced the same thing in my 10 years on the road with Dickey, as he preferred to call different tunes at any time during a show. Like Warren, my decision in this circumstance was to simply stick with standard tuning for everything, and also to deploy the slide to my fret-hand ring finger at the end of every song, if it wasn't already on there!

The basic principles of slide are: what type of slide to use (metal, glass, ceramic), what finger to wear it on (usually the middle finger, ring finger or pinkie) and the appropriate action (string height) on the guitar to facilitate slide playing. The general rule is that your action may need to be a bit higher than normal; this, of course, depends on the player's personal preference.

FIGURE 1 presents the intro slide solo in "Light of Love." It replicates the verse vocal melody and is for the most part based on the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D), with brief reference to the E Aeolian mode (E, F♯, G, A, B, C, D), which includes the major 2nd (2), F♯, and the minor, or flatted, 6th (♭6), C. Notice that the entire solo is played on the 5th-through-3rd strings and that the open G string is used for specific articulation of the melodic line. As always, strive for good intonation (pitch accuracy) when playing this slide solo.

FIGURE 2 illustrates the main solo I play in the middle of the song. Like the intro solo, the phrases closely adhere to the chord progression, so be aware of how each melodic line resolves to an appropriate chord tone. Also, notice that this solo presents an entirely new melody. A great concept to keep in mind when crafting a solo is that it should serve as a "composition within a composition," and that was my goal here.

FIG. 1

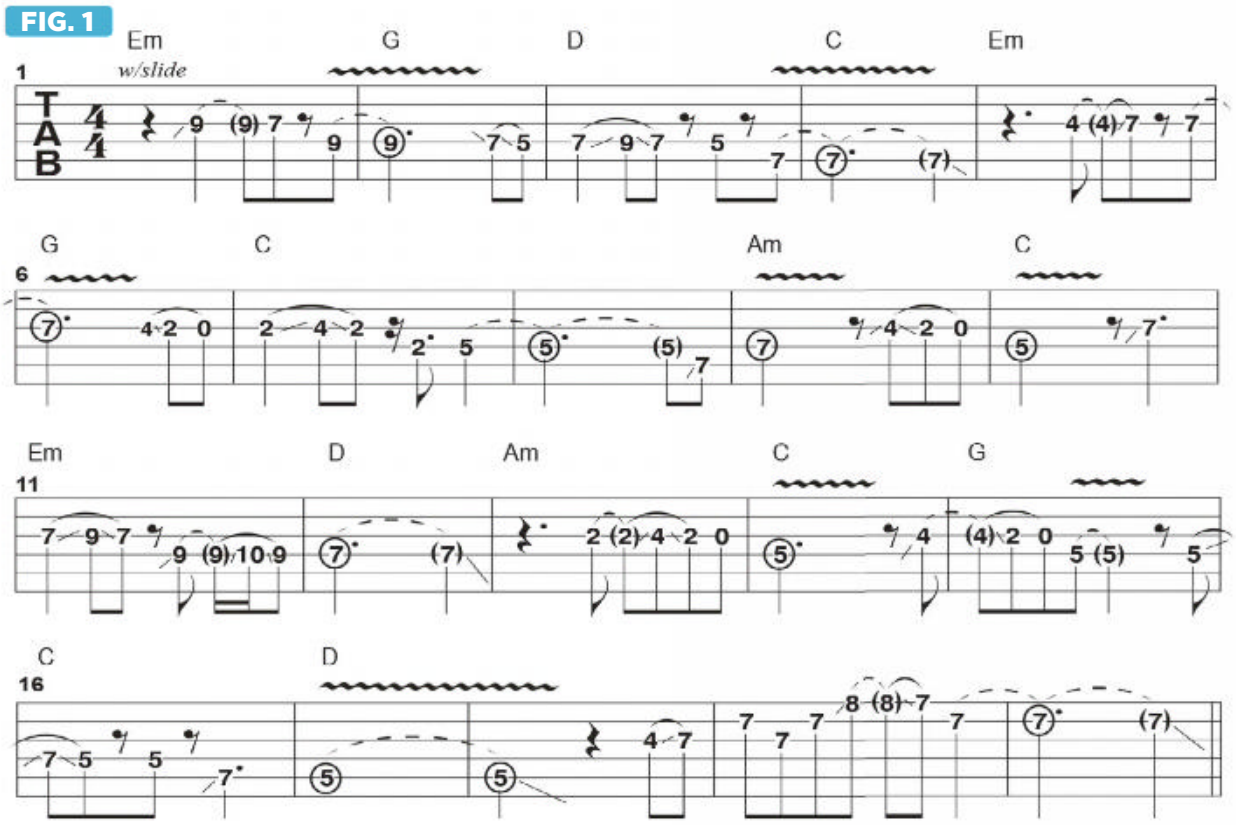
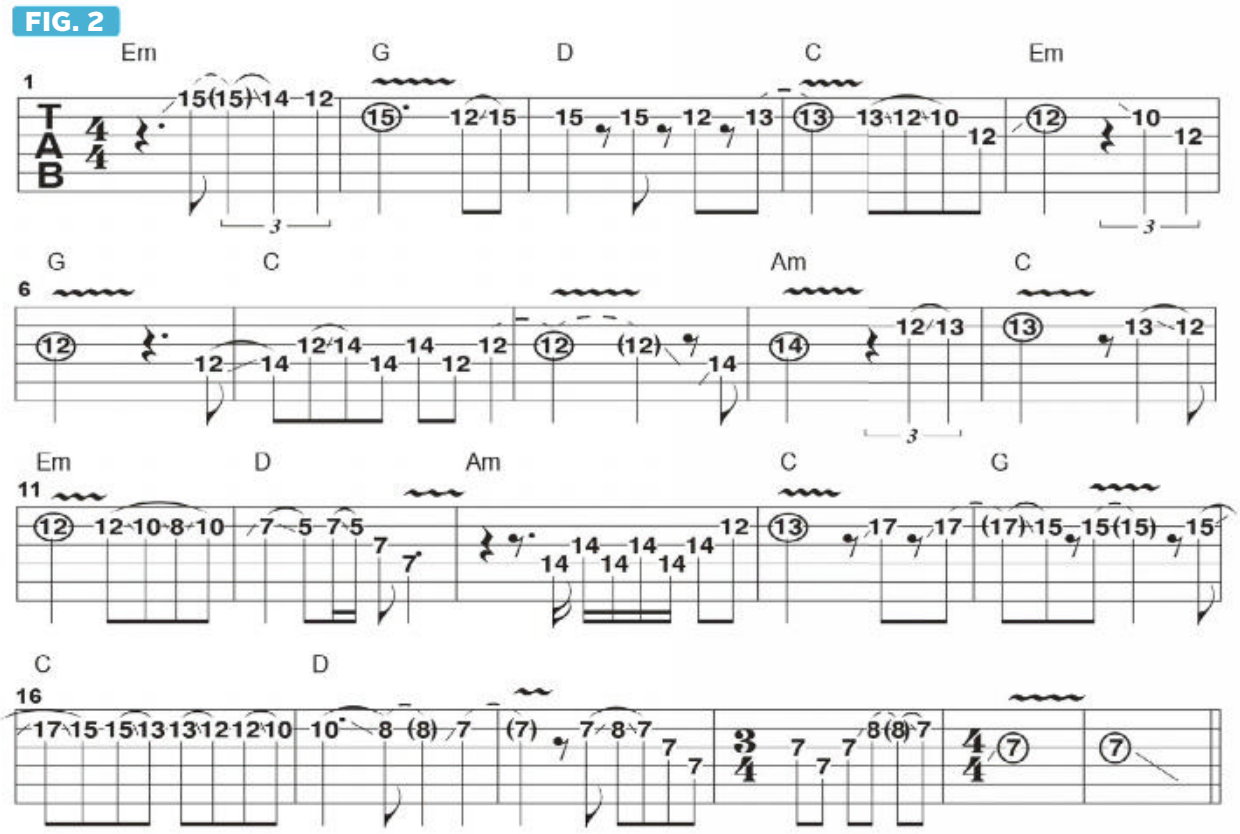


FIG. 2



***GW* associate editor Andy Aledort is recognized worldwide for his vast contributions to guitar instruction, via his many best-selling instructional DVDs, transcription books and online lessons. His new album, *Light of Love*, is available from andyaledort.com and all streaming services.**

TALES FROM NERDVILLE

by Joe Bonamassa

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2022

CHAIRMAN OF THE BORED

How to "connect the dots" to break out of a rut

THE FOCUS OF this column is: How does one "connect the dots" when stuck in a rut, playing the same old licks over and over again? By "connecting the dots," I mean literally the means by which we connect one scale position to the next in the development of solo-type phrases. Every guitar player, at one time or another, goes through the syndrome of getting frustrated with playing the same phrases and ideas and realizes they need to re-imagine their approach to soloing in order to keep things fresh.

The approach that has been most helpful to me has been the quest to understand how to move up and down the fingerboard in musically useful ways. This focus on examining the ways in which licks and patterns can weave into one another has actually been more useful to me than studying music theory! For example, if I'm playing in the key of E, I know where to go and what phrases to play, in every area of the fretboard. This level of fretboard awareness took many hours of practice to acquire, so, as always, time spent woodshedding on your instrument will reap many benefits.

FIGURE 1 offers a demonstration on how I might typically descend through a series of fretboard patterns and positions over the course of a long solo-type phrase. Using essentially all scale positions of E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D), I begin up in 17th position, immediately shifting down to 15th and then 12th positions by the end of bar 1. Bar 2 descends to 9th and 7th positions, and in bars 3 and 4 I shift downwards to 5th and 3rd positions. All of these shifts generally happen by moving down one extra note on a given string. It is this one-note shift that results in a new handful of fresh-sounding licks that I will have at my disposal.

In **FIGURE 2**, I use a similar approach to ascend through various positions of E minor pentatonic, beginning in 5th position and shifting up to 7th, 9th and 12th positions. The goal is to make each shift sound seamless and natural. When done correctly, the fretboard seems to open up completely to new phrases and melodic ideas.

My mindset is to look at the fretboard and group everything in "boxes." **FIGURE 3** depicts the lowest box, as the phrases all reside between 1st and 3rd positions. Then, as shown in **FIGURE 4**, I move up to the next area of the fretboard by playing riffs that fall primarily between 5th and 7th positions.

I encourage you to expand upon this approach by continuing to move up the neck through every successive position of E minor pentatonic, while striving to make every position shift sound seemless. As this approach becomes ingrained into your daily practice routine, you'll never again be a Chairman of the Bored, as you continually discover new and surprising solo ideas.

FIG. 1 N.C. (Em)

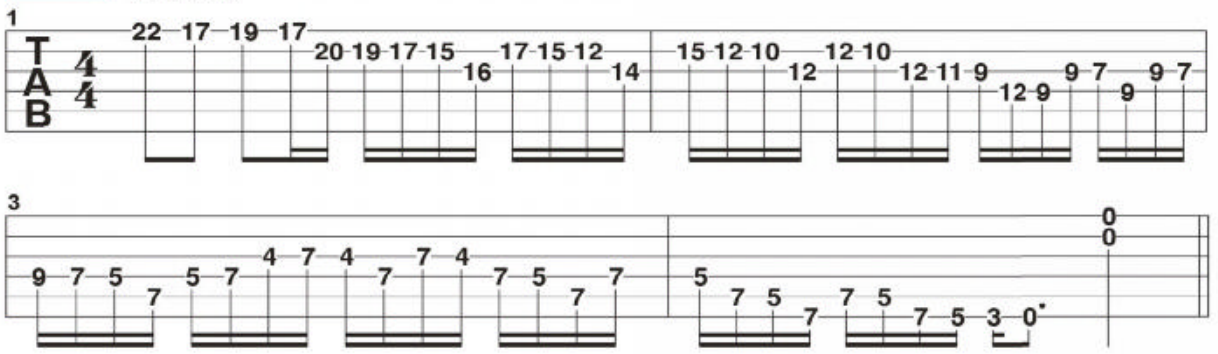


FIG. 2 N.C. (Em)

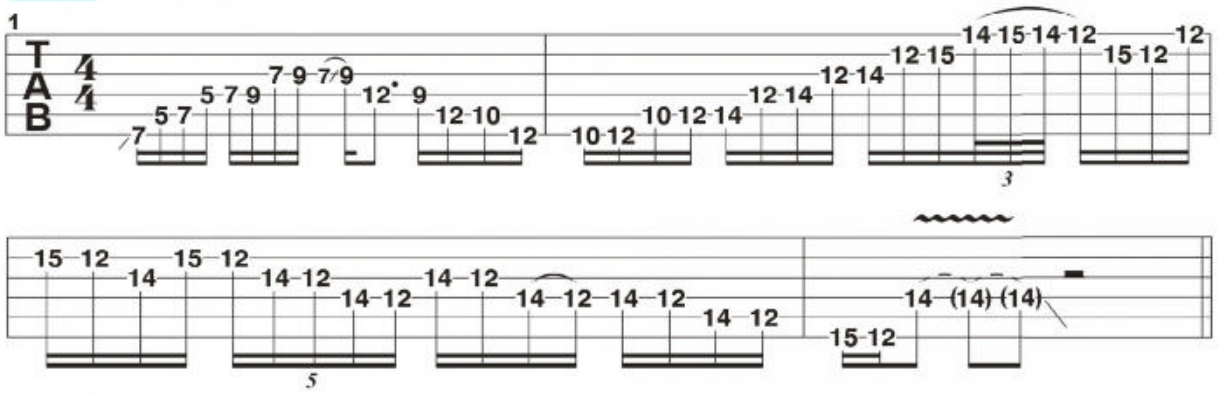


FIG. 3 N.C. (Em)

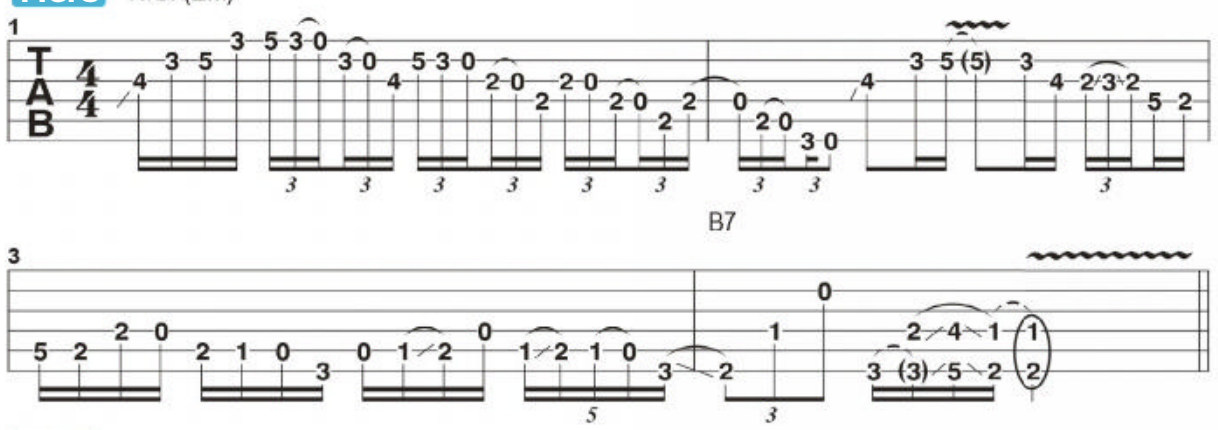
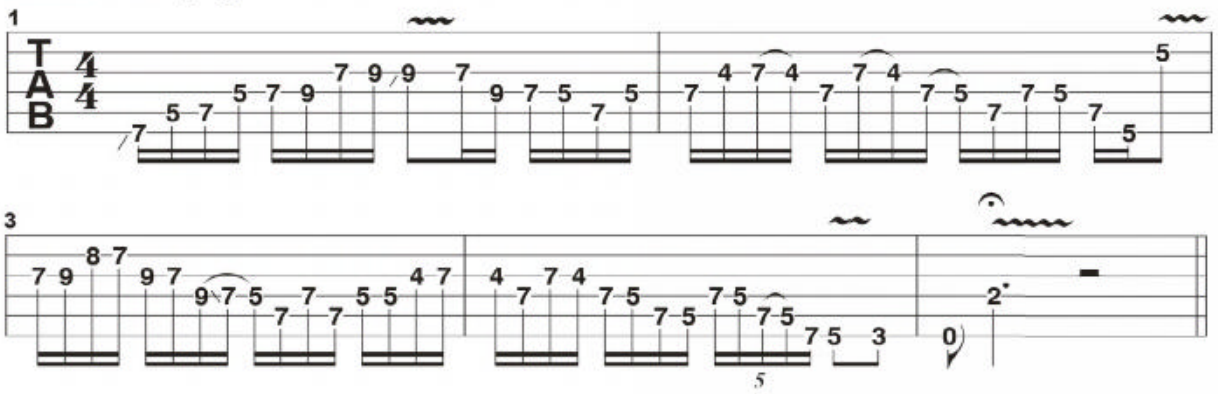


FIG. 4 N.C. (Em)



Joe Bonamassa is one of the world's most popular and successful blues-rock guitarists — not to mention a top producer and *de facto* ambassador of the blues (and of the guitar in general).

ELEANOR JANE

MELODIC MUSE

by Andy Timmons

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2022

DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

How to play "When Words Fail," part 2

THIS MONTH, WE'LL continue our look at the song "When Words Fail," from my new album, *Electric Truth*. As I mentioned last month, "When Words Fail" is a ballad that's played in $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, which may be counted "*one*-two-three, *two*-two-three," and is in the key of A major, also balancing on the "axis" of the relative minor tonal center, F♯ minor. Last month, we broke down the tune's verse section, and now we'll delve into the chorus and its associated chord progression and melodic lines.

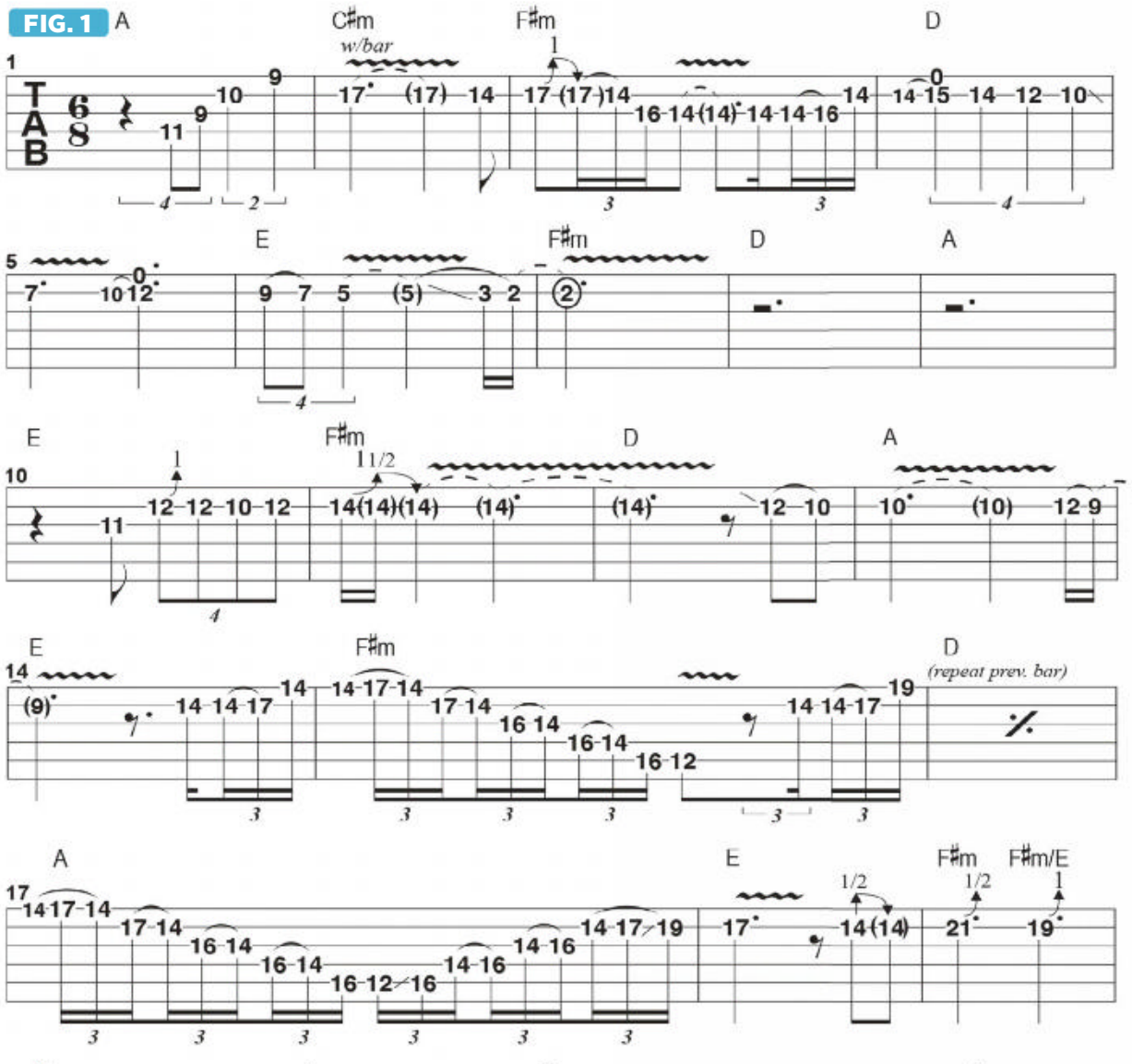
FIGURE 1 presents the chorus section, starting with the last six bars of the verse, so that you can get a clear sense of how the verse "travels" into the chorus. The end of the verse progression is A - C♯m - F♯m - D - E, and the chorus begins on the F♯m chord in bar 7. The melody as a whole is derived from the A major scale (A, B, C♯, D, E, F♯, G♯), so be aware of how each note relates to the given chord as the song moves forward.

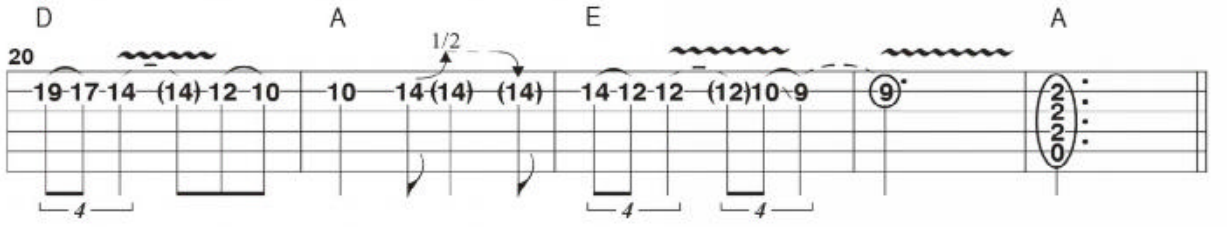
As you play through these first few bars, notice in particular the specific rhythmic syncopation of the melody. In bars 1, 2, 4 and 5, I superimpose an even-eighths or -quarters feel over groups of three eighth notes. "Crossing the line" between a consistent $\frac{6}{8}$ feel and a superimposed straight $\frac{4}{4}$ feel in this way is something I naturally gravitate toward. I find that the rhythmic variations here add more expression to the melodic lines played through this section of the tune. Of note also is the inclusion of the open high E string in bars 3 and 4. I love how the open E note enhances both the harmonic and textural qualities to the melody.

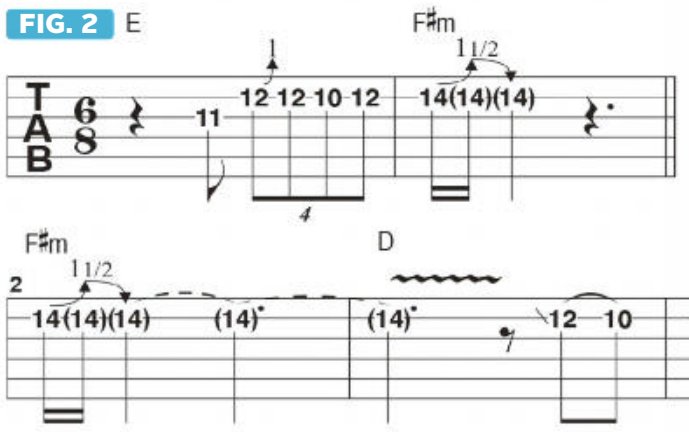
As the chorus begins at the F♯m chord, you can see that I don't play any melody at all. Playing nothing is a melodic choice, too! I allow the first three chords — F♯m, D and A — to sound, waiting until the subsequent E chord to begin the chorus melody. Based on the A major pentatonic scale (A, B, C♯, E, F♯), this note series may also be analyzed as F♯ minor pentatonic (F♯, A, B, C♯, E), as F♯m sounds in bar 10, followed by a resolution to the relative major chord, A, in bar 12.

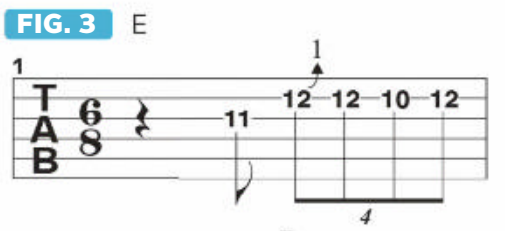
Up to this point, just about everything in the melody could be sung, which is part of the reason why I shift to faster, more guitar-oriented phrases in bars 14-16. Since this section is presented as faster, more lick-type phrases, the articulation of the fast lines becomes even more important, as I don't want to compromise the melody's vocal quality.

FIGURE 2 offers a more detailed look at the way the chorus melody begins, which incorporates a one-and-one-half step overbend in bar 2. **FIGURE 3** demonstrates how that initial phrase sets up the shift to a much simpler resolution to the melody in bars 3-5.









Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. His new album, *Electric Truth*, is out now. Visit andytimmons.com and guitarxperience.net to check out his recordings and many instructional releases.

SIMONE CECHETTI

BLUES TRUTH

by Kirk Fletcher

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2022

GETTIN' DOWN TO IT

How to play "Ain't No Cure for the Downhearted"

THIS MONTH, I'D like to go over a track from my 2020 album, *My Blues Pathway,* called "Ain't No Cure for the Downhearted." One of the things I like about this song is that it's definitely blues with a twist, as I incorporate elements of soul/R&B, in terms of the groove, feel and rhythm guitar parts I crafted for the song. "Ain't No Cure" is a great example of how I like to combine elements from various musical styles that have influenced me together in an original composition.

FIGURE 1 shows the intro rhythm guitar part, which starts with the ascending root-5th chords G5 and A5. As a reference, you can hear a similar type of ♭7-to-tonic chord movement at the beginning of the Temptations song "Papa Was a Rolling Stone." This riff is a two-bar figure that's played eight times before segueing into the verse.

Following the A5 chord on beat 1, I play a series of two-note dyads, first barring across the top two strings at the 3rd fret, sounding D and G, to make reference to G/A, or A7sus4. The subsequent D and F♯ notes allude to D/A, and I end the bar with a G-C dyad, referencing C5, and E-A, describing A5. Bar 2 is identical but ends with a restatement of the initial G5-to-A5 move. This type of rhythm idea was inspired by listening to the great Robben Ford.

The verse section begins at bar 3, and bars 3-6 consist of the same Am-type rhythm part, with hard accents placed on the quarter-note downbeats. On beat 4 of bars 3-5, I add a hammer-on figure, from C to D, to make the part funkier. Bars 7 and 8 move to the IV (four) chord, Dm7, played in a similar fashion, and bars 9 and 10 move back to the Am rhythm figure. Bar 11 moves to the ♭VI (flat 6) chord, F7, followed in bar 12 with the V (five) chord, E7, after which I shift back to the initial Am rhythm part.

FIGURE 2 represents what I think of as a three-bar "verse tag," as half-note accents on Dm, C and G triads resolve to the V chord, E7, which sets up the return to the top of the form.

When I perform this song live, I'm singing over it. And so I tighten up the rhythm part a bit and opt to play a more succinct rhythm pattern behind my vocal, to leave a bit more space in the music, leaning on subtle hammer-on-type phrases, like those played on beat 4 of the Am chords.

FIGURE 3 illustrates solo ideas that I like to play over the "Ain't No Cure" rhythm part. In this nine-bar example, I stick to the A minor pentatonic scale (A, C, D, E, G) and play relatively short, melodic phrases that are firmly in blues guitar territory. This approach is one that is most natural for me, and you'll also hear it in the playing styles of Buddy Guy, Robert Cray and many others.

FIG. 1

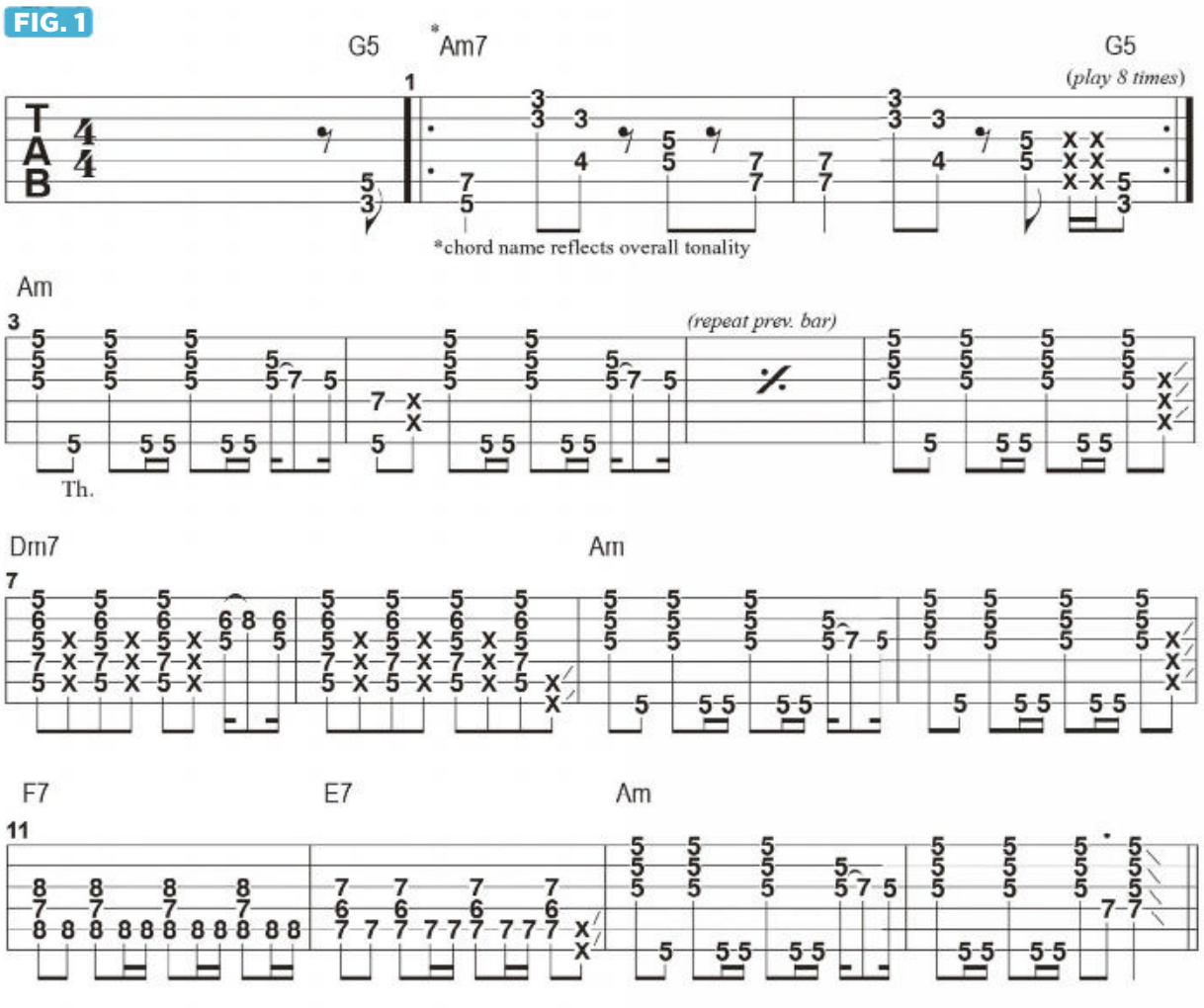


FIG. 2

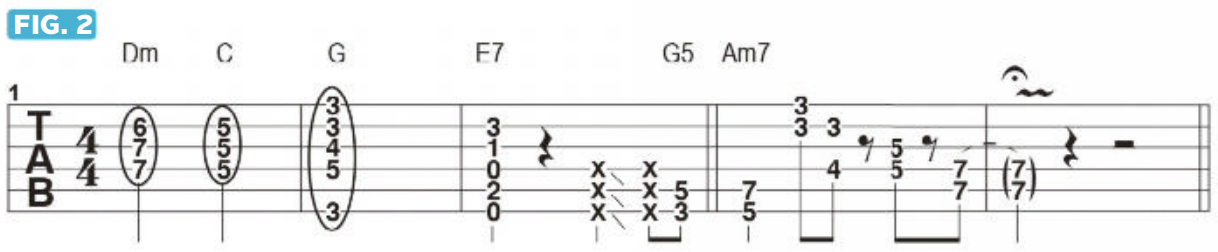
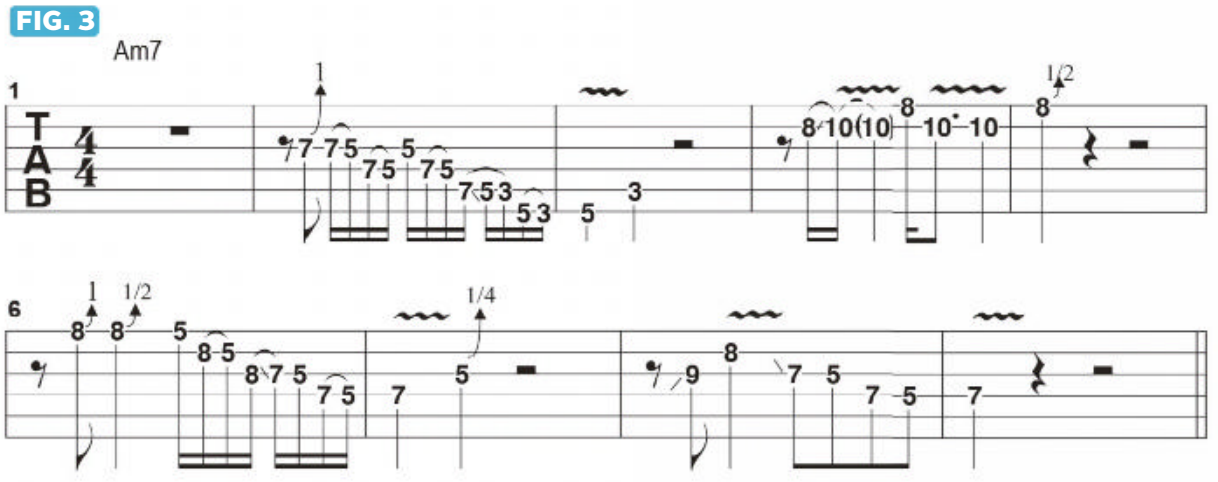


FIG. 3



Kirk Fletcher, a former member of the Fabulous Thunderbirds, is an internationally respected guitarist and teacher. His latest album, *My Blues Pathway*, was nominated for a 2021 Blues Music Award.

RICK GOULD

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Performance Notes

HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS **By Jimmy Brown**

"MR. CROWLEY" Ozzy Osbourne

THIS CLASSIC, HAUNTINGLY beautiful composition features some of the late, great Randy Rhoads' finest musical moments in his brief but brilliant career collaborating with the legendary Ozzy Osbourne. Written in the key of D minor, the song is built around a suite of inventive, sophisticated classical-style chord progressions that combine the modal colors of D Aeolian, or D natural minor (D, E, F, G, A, B♭, C), D harmonic minor (D, E, F, G, A, B♭, C♯) and, in the intro, a little bit of D Dorian (D, E, F, G, A, B, C), via the Em7 chord.

We've arranged the two keyboard synth parts that begin the song for guitar in drop-D tuning, which allows for a satisfyingly full-sounding rendering of the "tall" chord voicings used in this "haunted castle"-like opening theme (see bars 1-11). Some of the fingerings here are a little demanding, requiring big barre chord shapes and a few stretches, but you'll find that with practice and tactile familiarity (a.k.a. muscle memory), your fingers will learn to reach for and cleanly form the fretboard shapes in a timely manner.

Randy's two solos in this song (see sections C and E) are among his most inspired melodic inventions ever caught on tape and showcase the guitarist's signature fiery musical passion and breathtaking lead playing technique, combined with his disciplined, melodic focus and harmonic awareness. Embracing the tried-and-true blues-rock approach of ripping through minor pentatonic and blues-scale patterns with lots of string bends, hammer-ons, pull-offs and soulful bend vibratos, Rhoads adds musical depth to these mini compositions by thoughtfully and effectively acknowledging and describing the underlying cycle-of 4ths/5ths chord changes in his lines. Especially noteworthy are his extensive use of three-notes-per string patterns with the aforementioned D natural and harmonic minor scales with double hammer-ons and pull-offs, chord tone targeting with rapid-fire triad arpeggios and some chromatic "spice," which the guitarist judiciously employs with alternate picking in bar 76 to create a blistering, cascading waterfall of notes. Also laudable are Randy's deft employment of shimmering trills, tremolo picking, finger slides and seamless position shifts.

"ALONE AGAIN" Asking Alexandria

A NEW FAN favorite, this recently released and much welcomed track from AA's latest album features the band's signature heavy and super-catchy song- and riff- writing paired with powerful vocals and tight, exciting arranging. As you can see, we've included the beautiful acoustic guitar-driven intro theme that serves as a compositionally stirring prelude to the song proper, which kicks in at section B (with the time counter reset to 0:00, as on the recording).

Using drop-D tuning, guitarists Cameron Liddell and Ben Bruce capitalize on the convenience of being able to craft nimble and heavy-sounding power chord riffs built around the detuned 6th string, using single-finger root-5th or root-5th-octave power chord shapes and "bouncing" them off the open string(s), as exemplified by the angular four-bar riff at section C that precedes the first verse. When playing this riff and the more subdued single-note verse and pre-chorus riffs that follow at sections D and E, respectively, be sure to apply the prescribed intermittent pick-hand palm muting (P.M.) to the strings. This is the key to replicating the desired subdued sound and feel of the riffs, which are by design musically subservient to the vocals during these parts of the song. This same reminder also applies to the second verse (section H). Notice the powerful dynamic contrast between these parts and the chorus (section F), where the guitarists don't use any palm muting and allow power chords to ring freely and roar.

Bruce's solo (beginning at section J) features the guitarist making great use of his entire fretboard by skilfully employing long finger slides, particularly on his G and B strings, to seamlessly transport his fret hand up and down the neck to various targeted notes, which is tricky to do without inadvertently overshooting or undershooting the intended note and hitting a musical "clam." Notice in bar 84 how he combines finger slides with tremolo picking to create a shimmering glissando effect. Bruce performs a similarly exciting and flashy move in bar 88, with a rapid-fire chromatic climb, using the Randy Rhoads-approved pick tapping/trilling technique, rapidly bouncing the edge of his pick off the strings.

"TRAIN, TRAIN" Blackfoot

CURRENT LYNYRD SKYNYRD guitarist-vocalist Rickey Medlocke is also distinguished and celebrated by fellow six-stringers and Southern rock alike fans for being the longtime frontman of the hard-riffing outfit Blackfoot, who had this rousing rock radio hit back in 1979 that sounds just as exciting today. Featuring Medlocke on slide guitar in open E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G♯, B, E) and co-guitarist Charlie Hagrett playing in standard tuning, the two axmen join forces in lock-step rhythmic fashion for the song's driving main riff that kicks off the arrangement after the harmonica solo intro, adapting the fingering of the notes and chords to best suit each guitarist's respective tuning. Medlocke frets the notes without slide for the E riff, and later uses it on the D, A and B chords as the verse unfolds.

For his first slide solo, starting with the lead-up to section C (see Gtr. 3 part, beginning at bar 17), Medlocke employs the straightforward but highly-effective approach of playing off a single-fret chord shape across the strings, whatever fret it may be located at, and dipping two frets below it to craft bluesy melodies based on a Mixolydian-hexatonic scale pattern. For example, Over the A chord in bars 18, 19, 22 and 23, the guitarist bases his licks at the 17th fret and slides down to the 15th fret and back. He takes the same approach over the E chord in bars 20, 21, 24 and 25, using the 12th fret as his home base and making brief excursions down to the 10th fret. This shape visualization approach is ideal for slide playing in an open tuning. The legendary Duane Allman used it to great effect with the Allman Brothers Band on such songs as "One Way Out," "Statesboro Blues" and "Done Somebody Wrong," although Duane was more inclined to stay in the "I (one)-chord" zone over the IV and V chords in a blues progression.

Rickey continues with this solid slide-melody-playing approach for his second solo, beginning at section E in our transcription. But he also goes out on a limb in a couple of spots here, namely bars 36 and 43, where he breaks away from the comforting familiarity of the chord shape and ventures *laterally* up or down a single string to play a more technically daring single-note line, which can be tricky to do well.

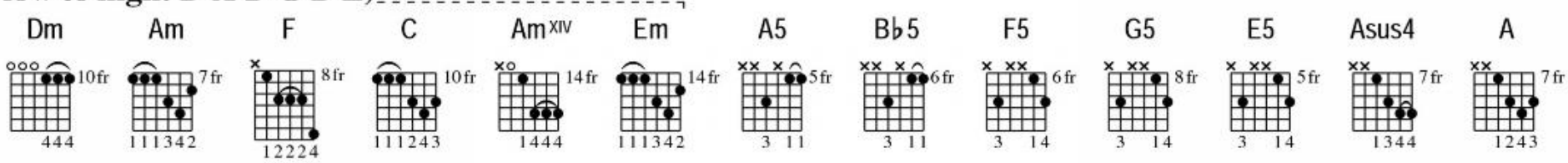
"MR. CROWLEY"

Ozzy Osbourne

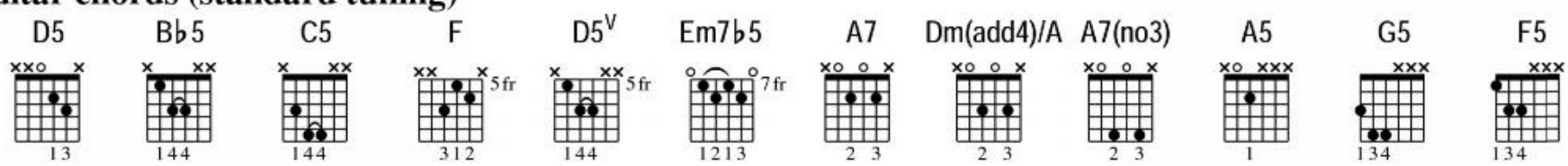
As heard on **BLIZZARD OF OZZ**

Words and Music by **OZZY OSBOURNE, RANDY RHOADS and BOB DAISLEY** • *Transcribed by* **ANDY ALEDORT**

Synth 2 chords (drop-D tuning; low to high: D A D G B E)

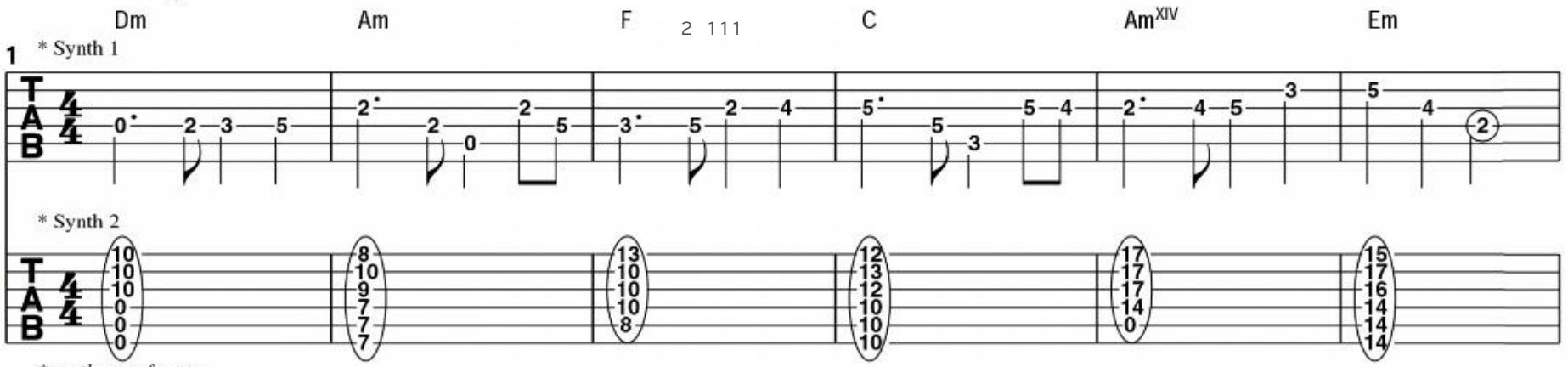


Guitar chords (standard tuning)

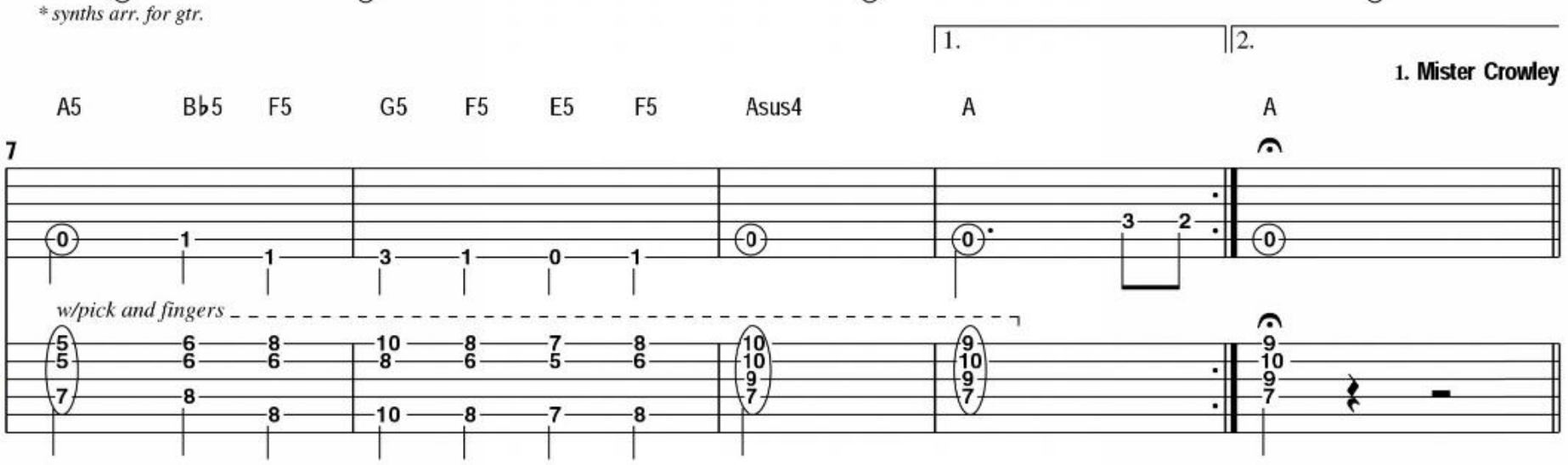


A **Intro** (0:00)

Moderately Slow ♩ = 90



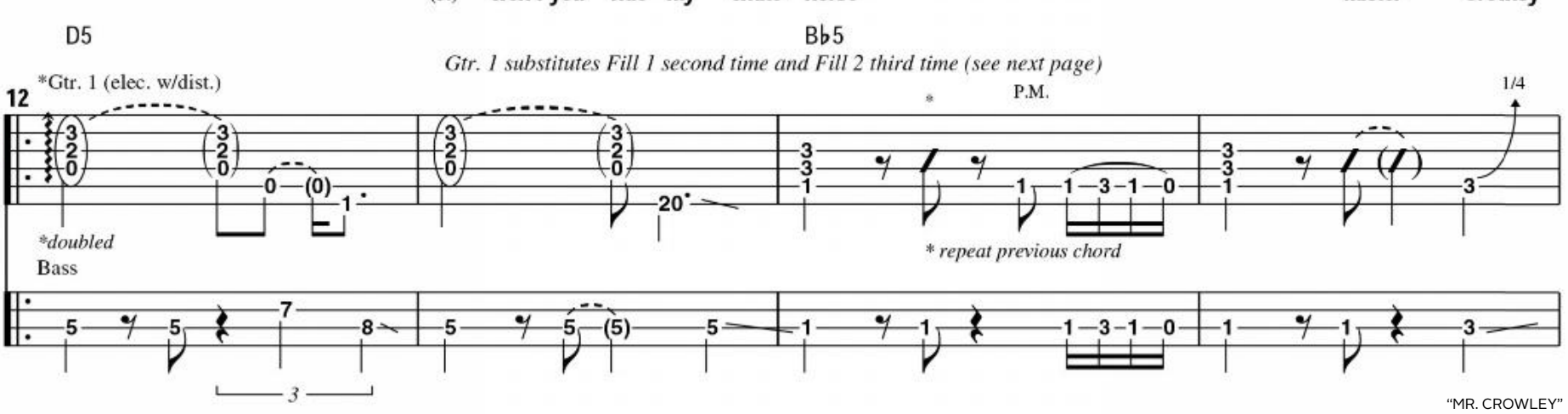
** synths arr. for gtr.*



B **Verses** (0:57, 1:33, 2:44)

what went on in your head
(2.) did you think you were pure
(3.) won't you ride my white horse

Oh Mister
Mister alarming
Mister Crowley



"MR. CROWLEY"
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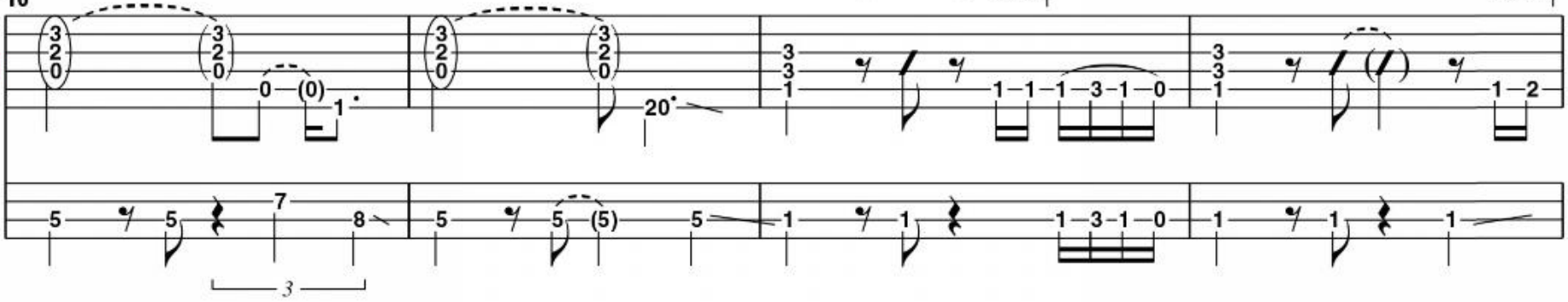
Crowley did you talk to the dead Your
in nocturnal rapport Uncovering
it's symbolic of course Approaching

D5 B♭5

Gtr. 1 substitutes Fill 2 second and third times (see below)

16

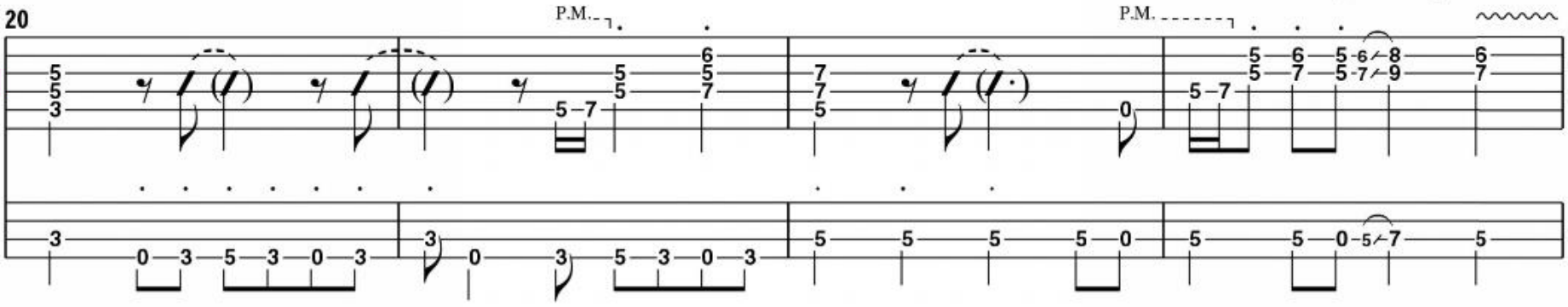


lifestyle to me seemed so tragic with the thrill of it all You
things that were sacred manifest on this earth Ah conceived
a time that is classic I hear that maiden's call Approaching

C5 F D5V

Gtr. 1 substitutes Fill 3 second time and Fill 4 third time (see below)

20

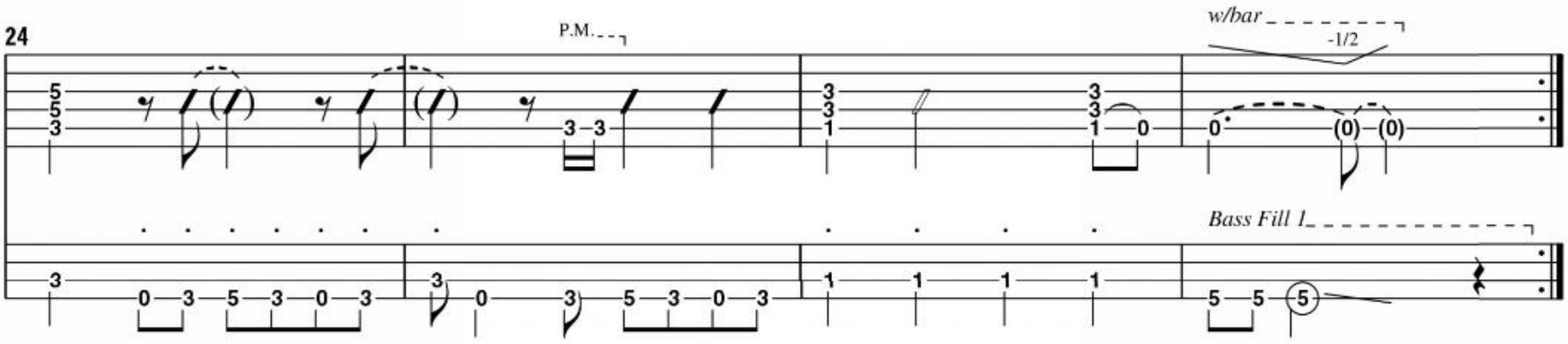


(3rd time) skip ahead to D 1.

fooled all the people with magic Yeah you waited on Satan's call 2. Mister Charming
in the eye of a secret Yeah they
a time that is drastic

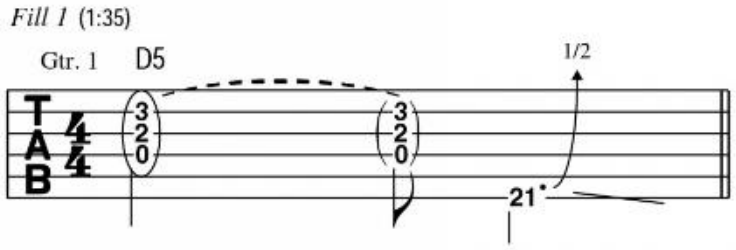
C5 B♭5 N.C.(A5)

24



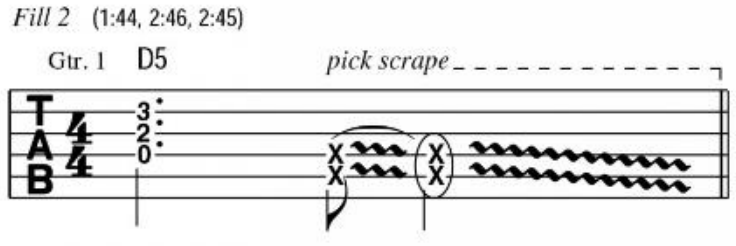
Fill 1 (1:35)

Gtr. 1 D5



Fill 2 (1:44, 2:46, 2:45)

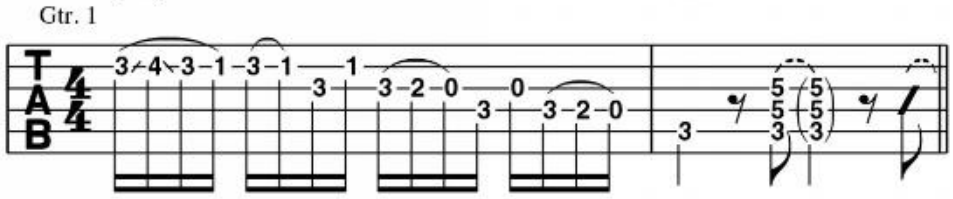
Gtr. 1 D5 *pick scrape*



Fill 3 (1:57)

(Dm) C5

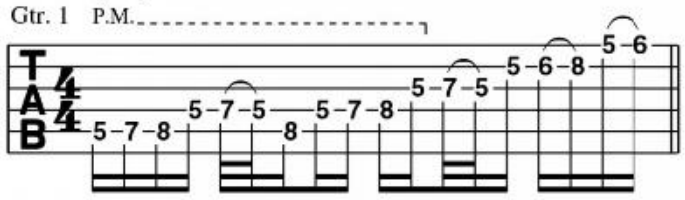
Gtr. 1

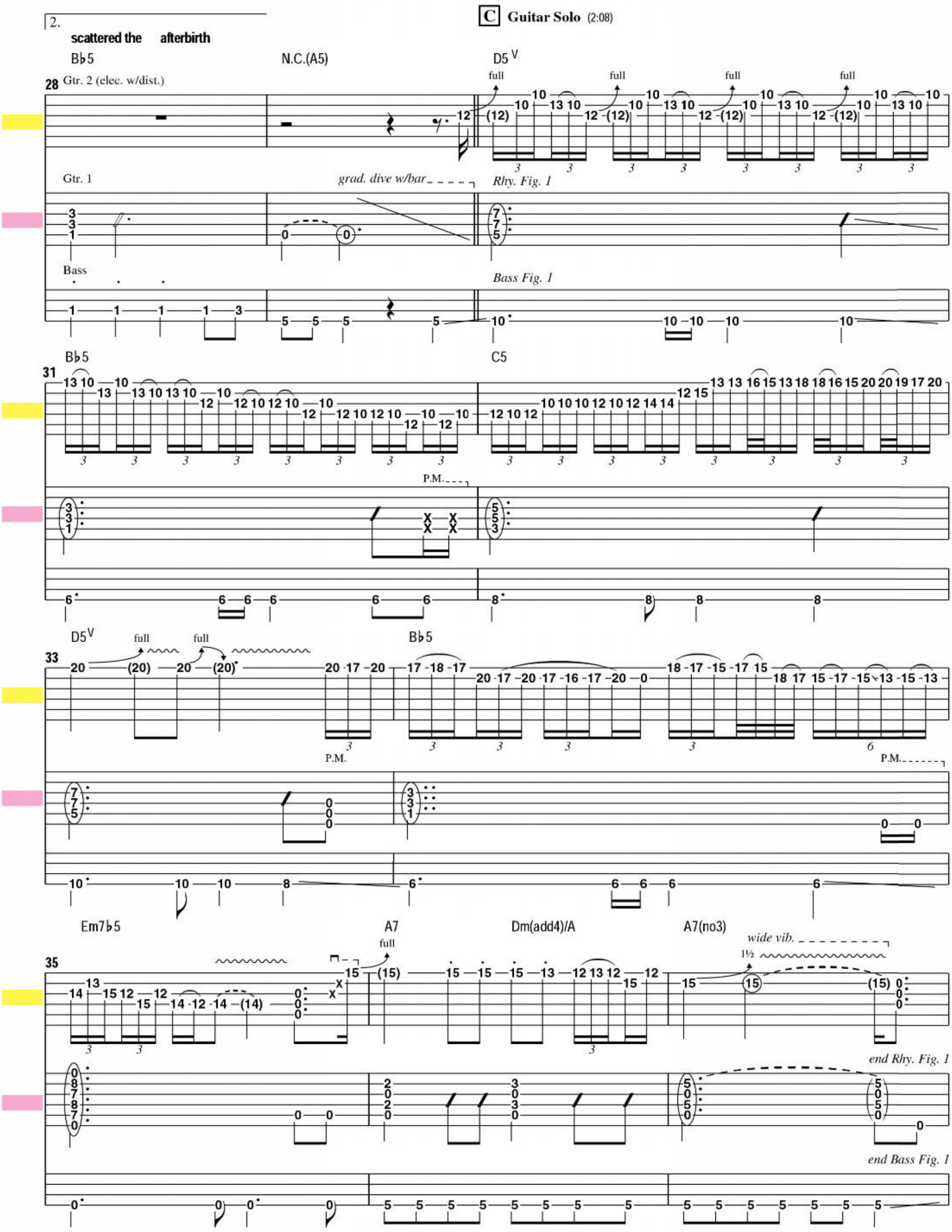


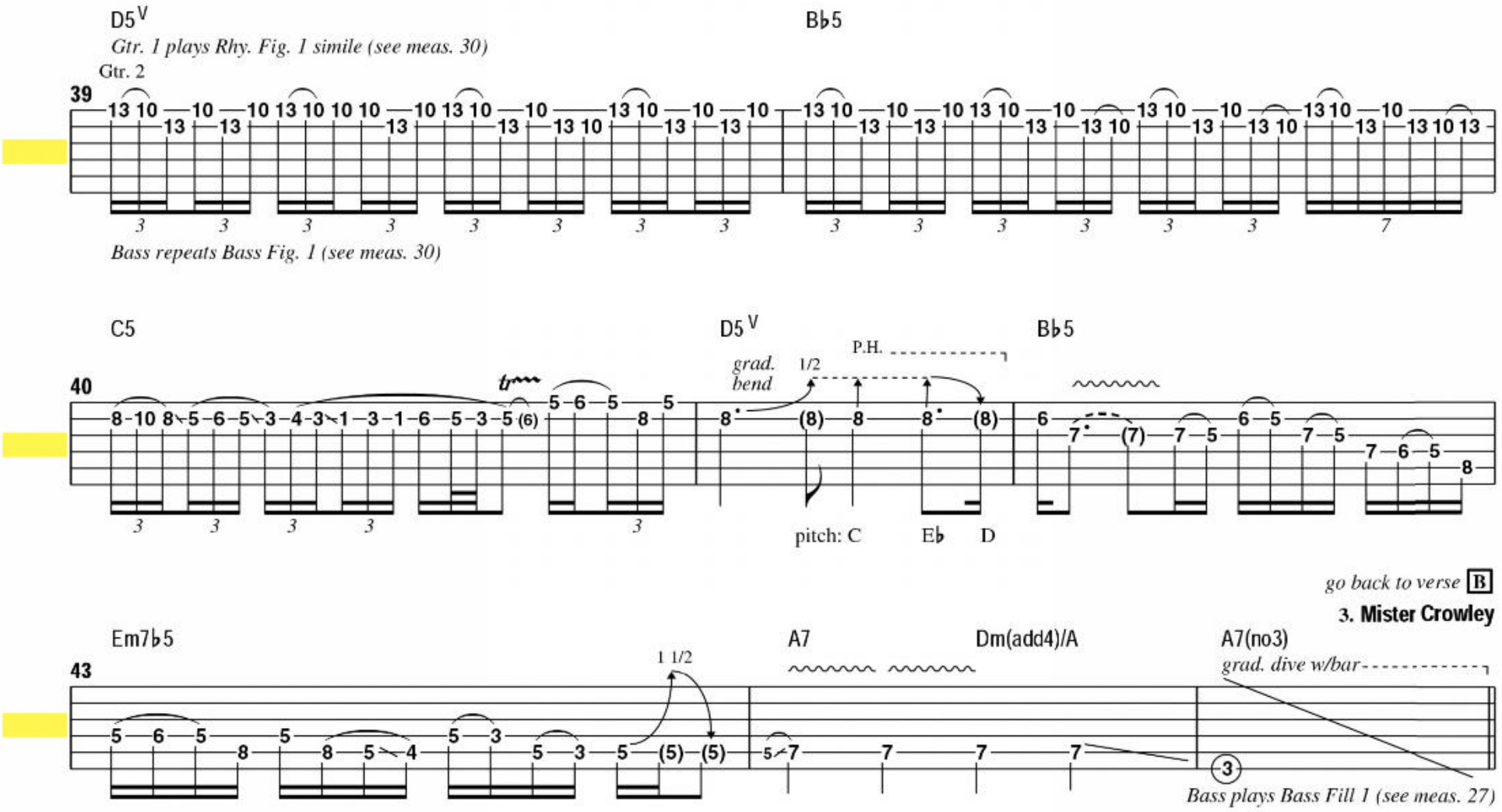
Fill 4 (3:08)

(Dm)

Gtr. 1 P.M.




2.
C Guitar Solo (2:08)
scattered the afterbirth
B♭5
N.C.(A5)
D5 V
28
Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)
full
Gtr. 1
grad. dive w/bar
Rhy. Fig. 1
Bass
Bass Fig. 1
B♭5
C5
31
P.M.
D5 V
B♭5
33
P.M.
Em7♭5
A7
Dm(add4)/A
A7(no3)
35
wide vib.
1½
end Rhy. Fig. 1
end Bass Fig. 1



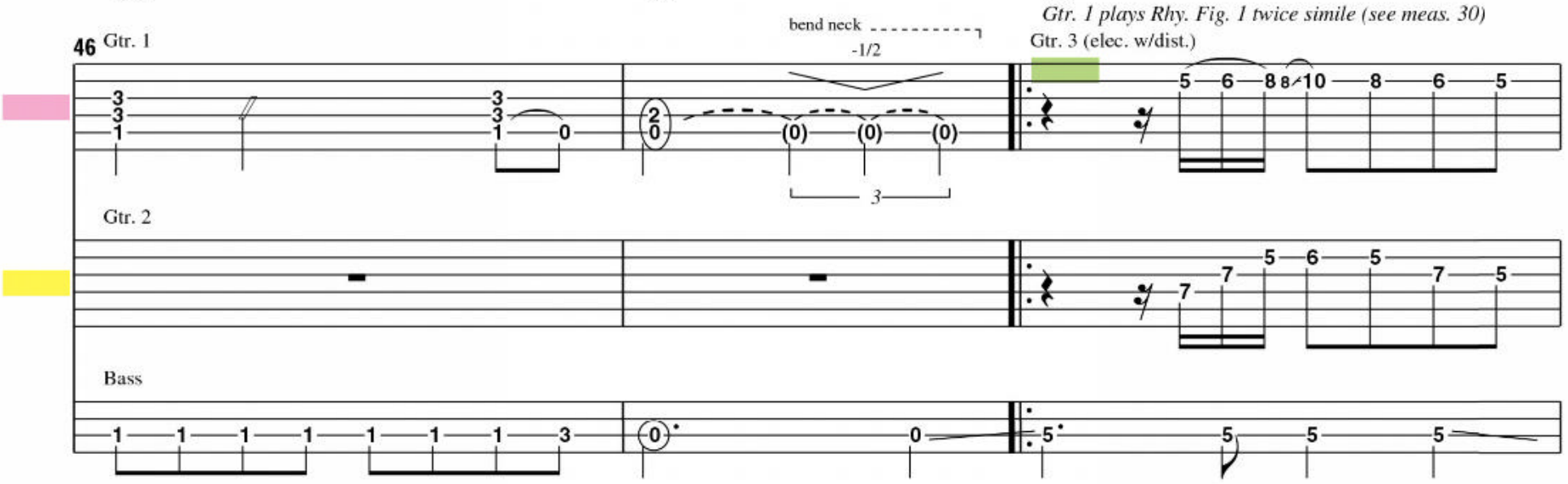
D (3:15)

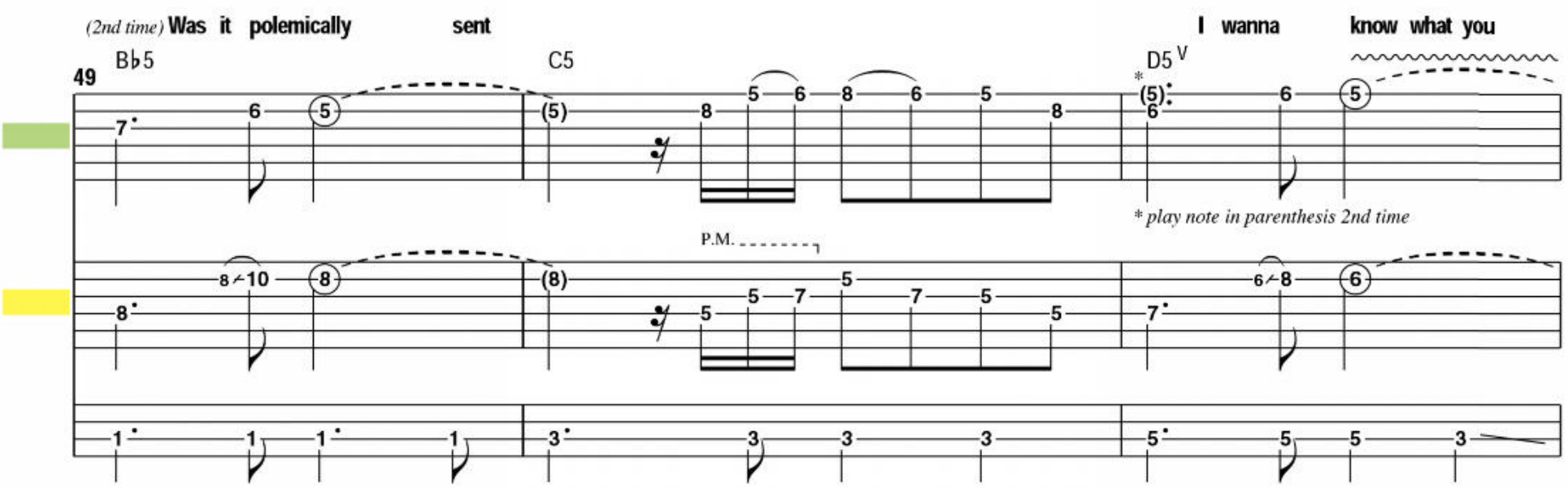
standing with their backs to the wall

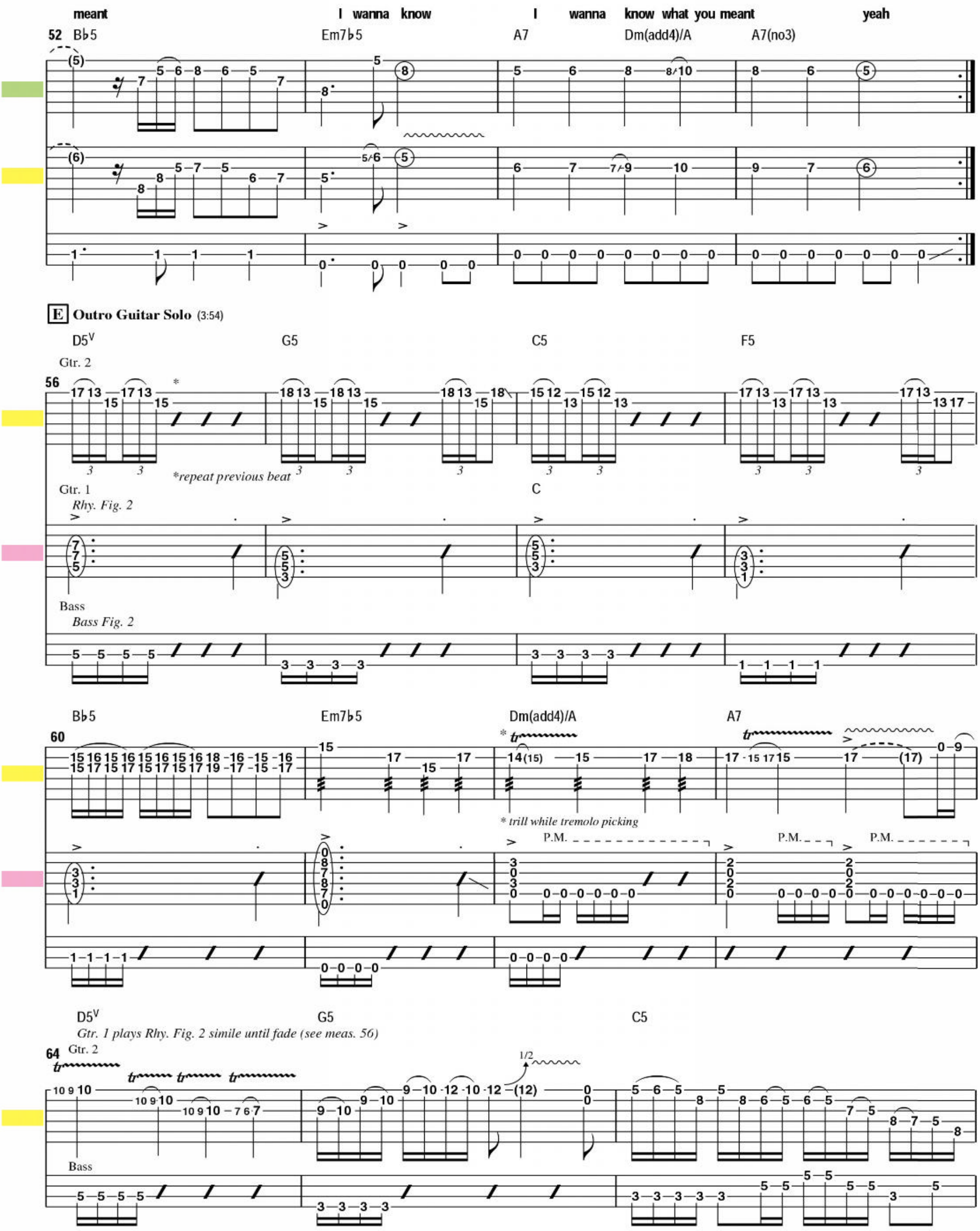
B♭5 A5

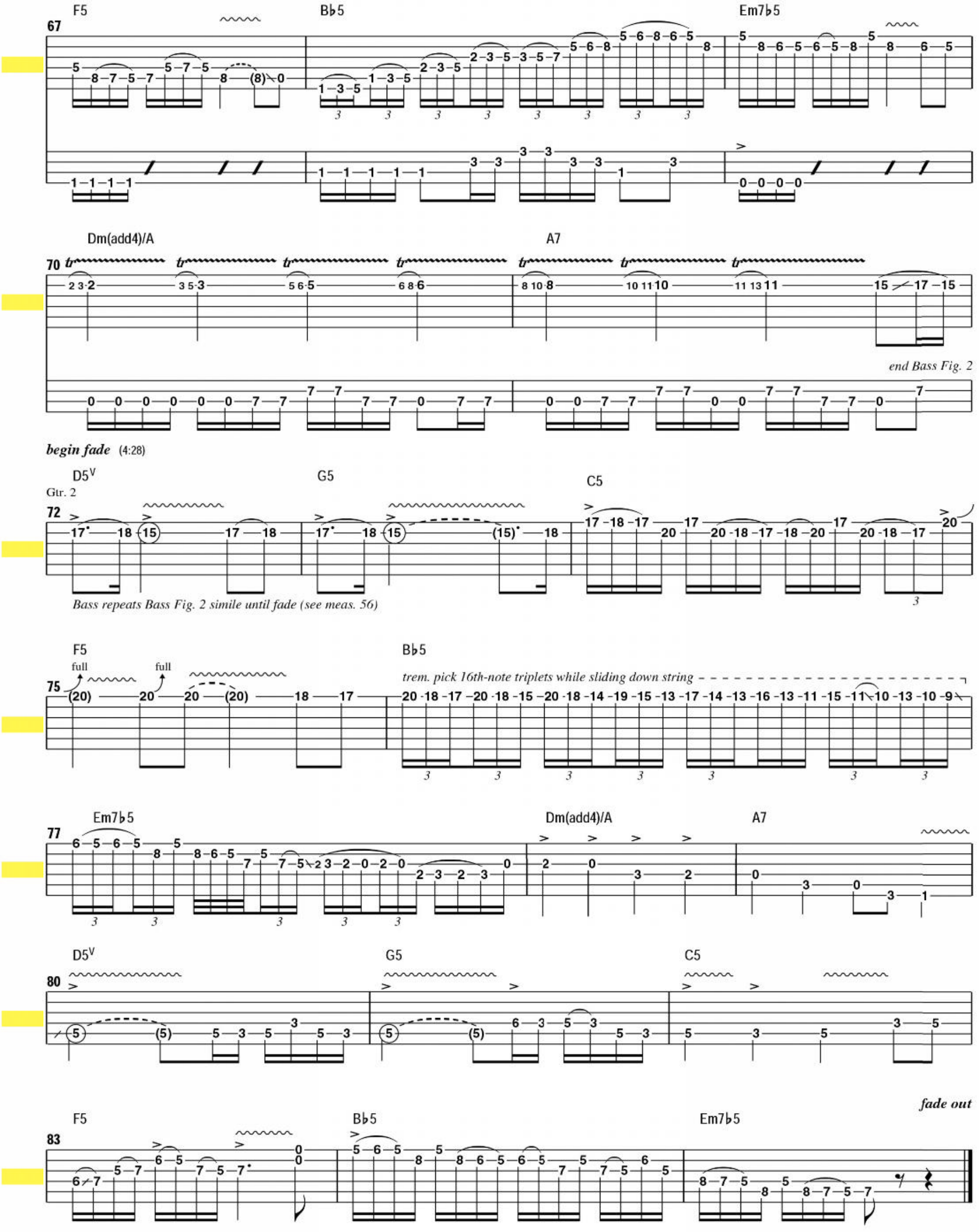
E **Interlude** (3:19)

D5 V






meant
I wanna know
I wanna know what you meant
yeah
52
B♭5
Em7♭5
A7
Dm(add4)/A
A7(no3)
E Outro Guitar Solo (3:54)
D5V
G5
C5
F5
Gtr. 2
56
*repeat previous beat
Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 2
C
Bass
Bass Fig. 2
B♭5
Em7♭5
Dm(add4)/A
A7
60
* trill while tremolo picking
P.M.
D5V
G5
C5
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 simile until fade (see meas. 56)
64
Gtr. 2
1/2
Bass


F5
B♭5
Em7♭5
67
Dm(add4)/A
A7
70
tr
end Bass Fig. 2
begin fade (4:28)
D5V
G5
C5
Gtr. 2
72
Bass repeats Bass Fig. 2 simile until fade (see meas. 56)
F5
full
full
B♭5
trem. pick 16th-note triplets while sliding down string
75
Em7♭5
Dm(add4)/A
A7
77
D5V
G5
C5
80
fade out
F5
B♭5
Em7♭5
83

"ALONE AGAIN"

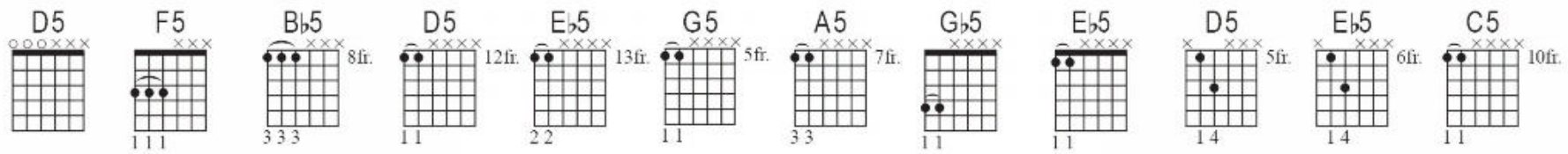
Asking Alexandria

As heard on **SEE WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE**

Words and Music by SAMUEL BETTLEY, BENJAMIN BRUCE, JAMES CASSELLS, MATTHEW GOOD, CAMERON LIDDELL and DANNY WORSNOP

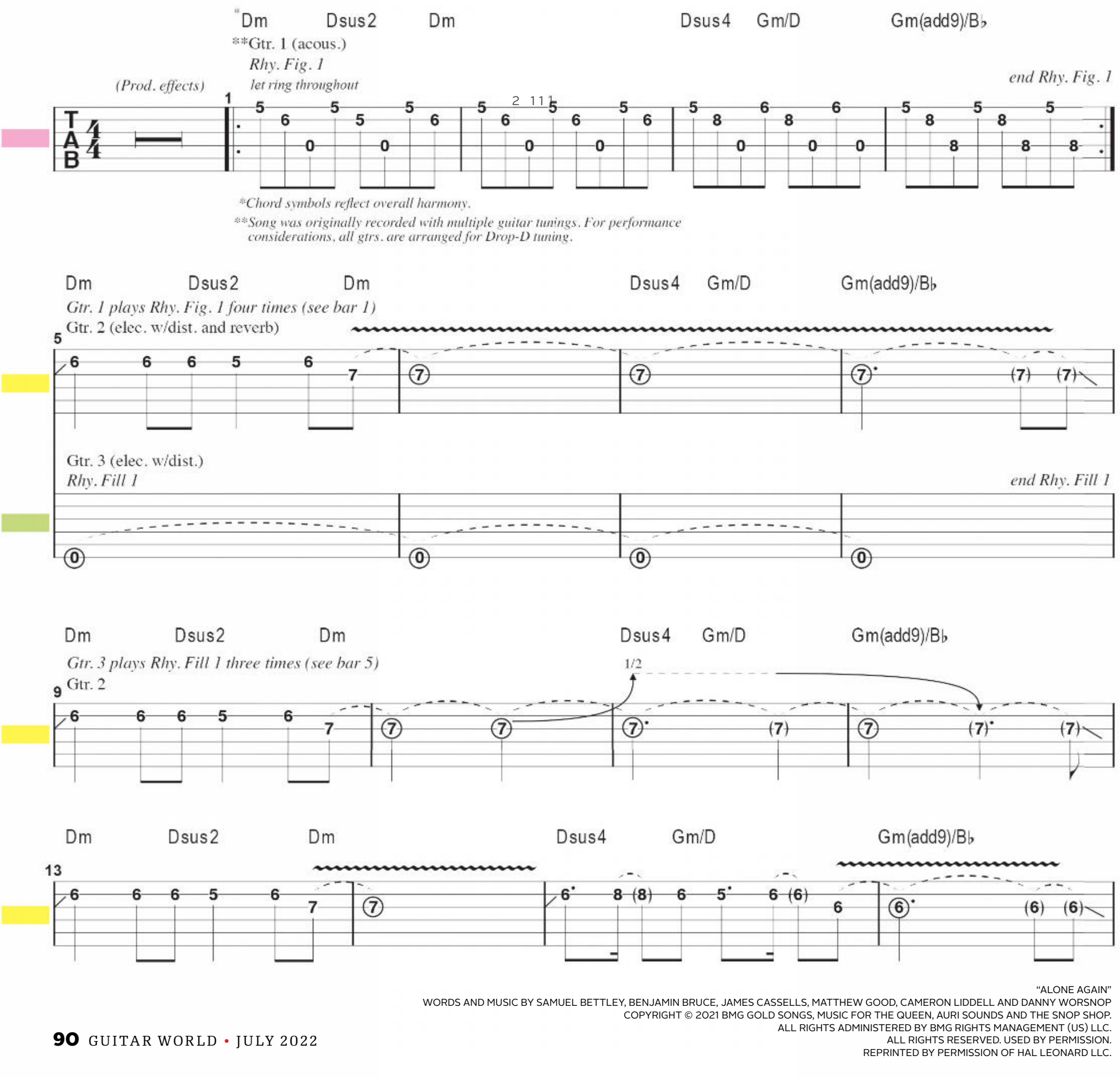
Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN

All guitars are in Drop-D tuning (low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E).
Bass is in Drop-D tuning (low to high: D, A, D, G).



A **Intro** (0:04)

Moderately ♩ = 110



"ALONE AGAIN"
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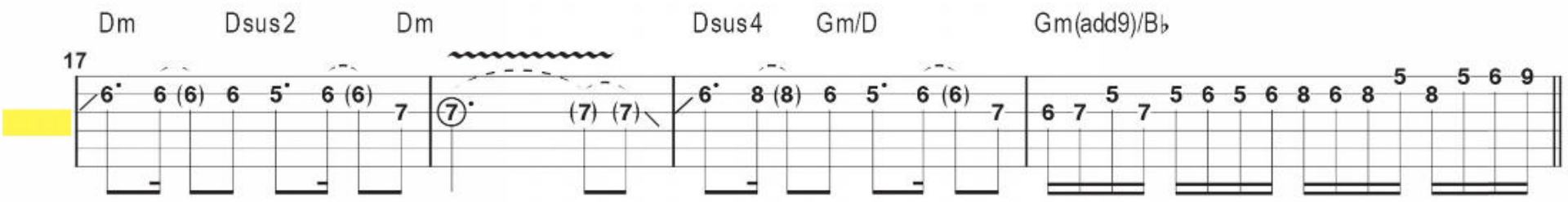
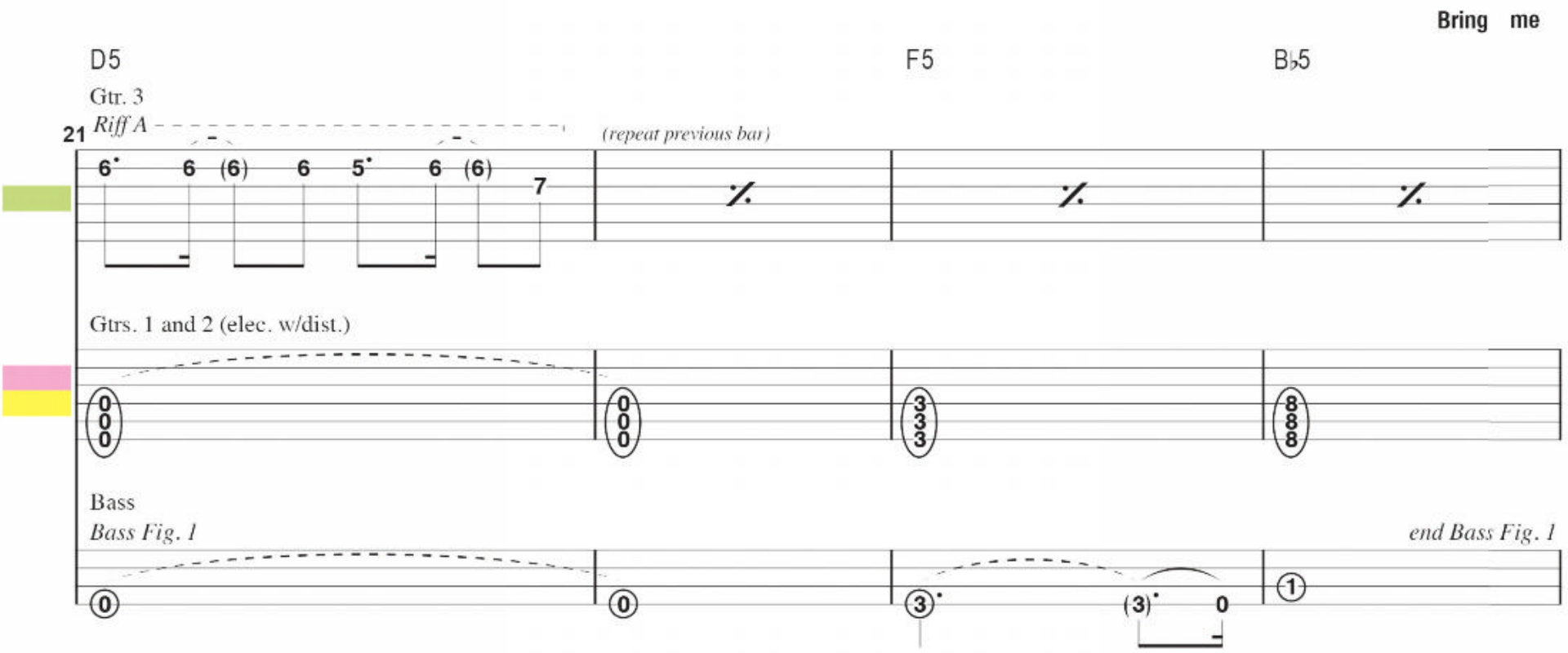


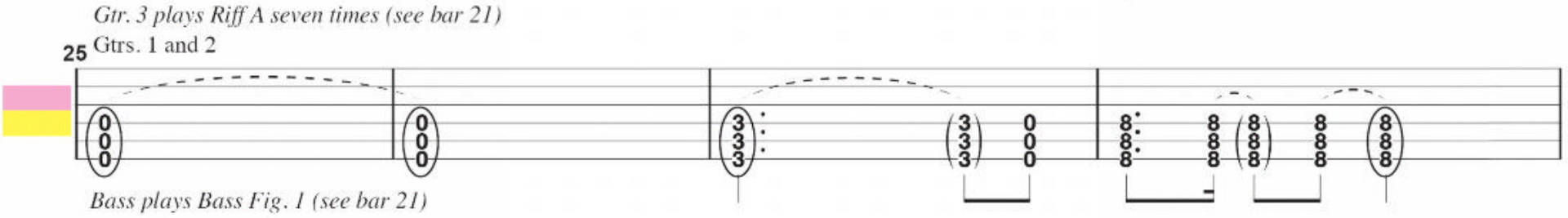
B (0:00)



hope Take me home I think I'm ready to be on my own Close my

D5 F5 B♭5

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A seven times (see bar 21)

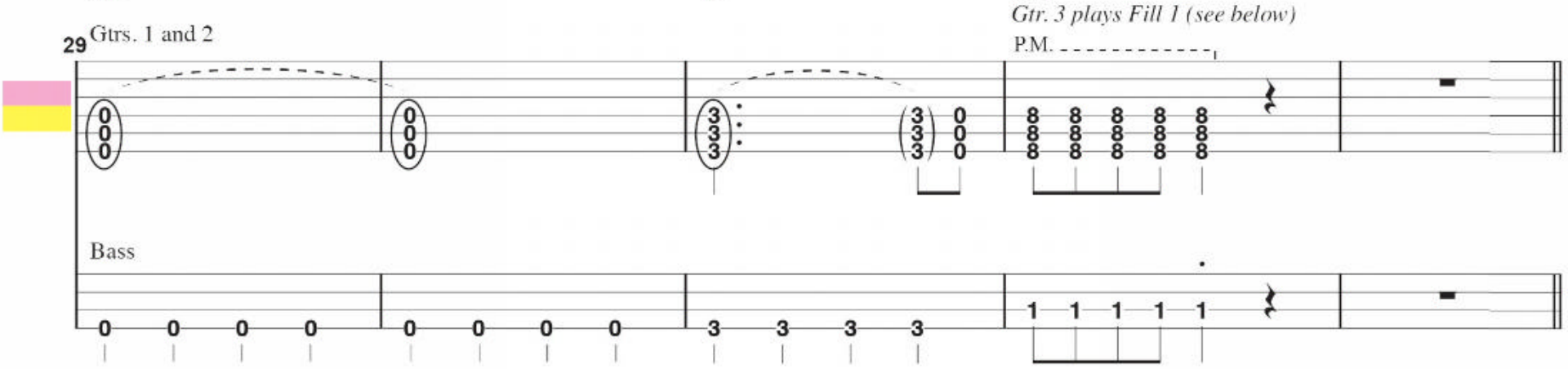


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 21)

eyes Lay me down I think it's time that I take some time to be alone again

D5 F5 B♭5

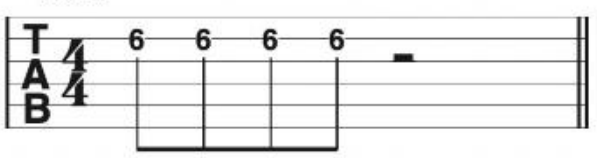
Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 (see below)



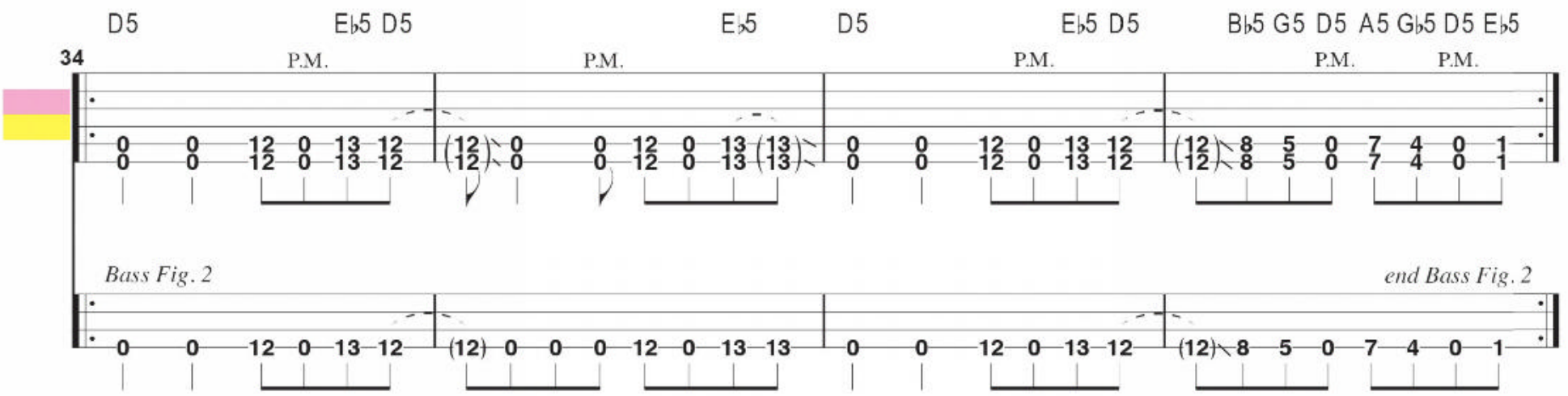
Fill 1 (0:24)

B♭5

Gtr. 3

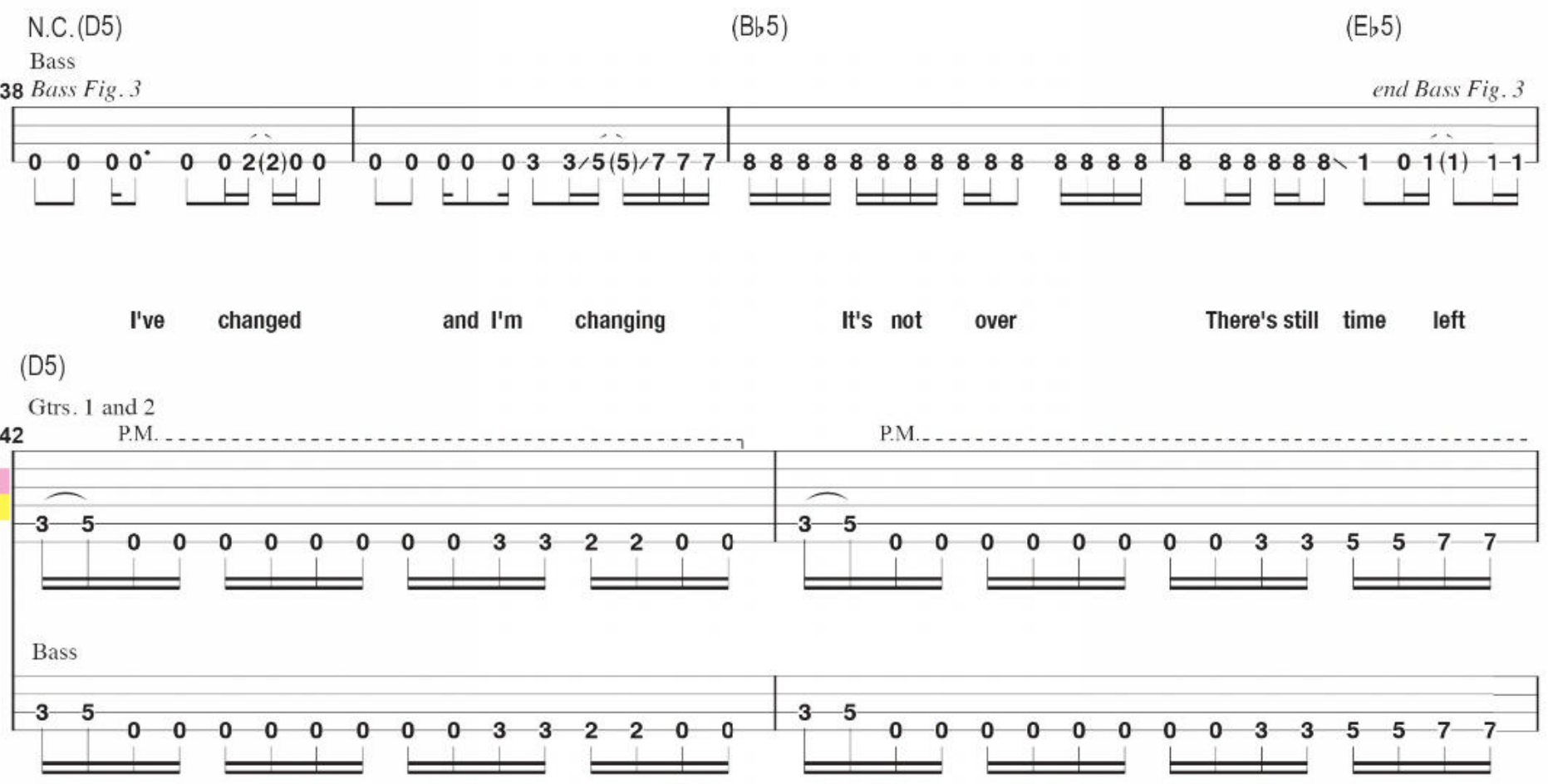


C (0:28)

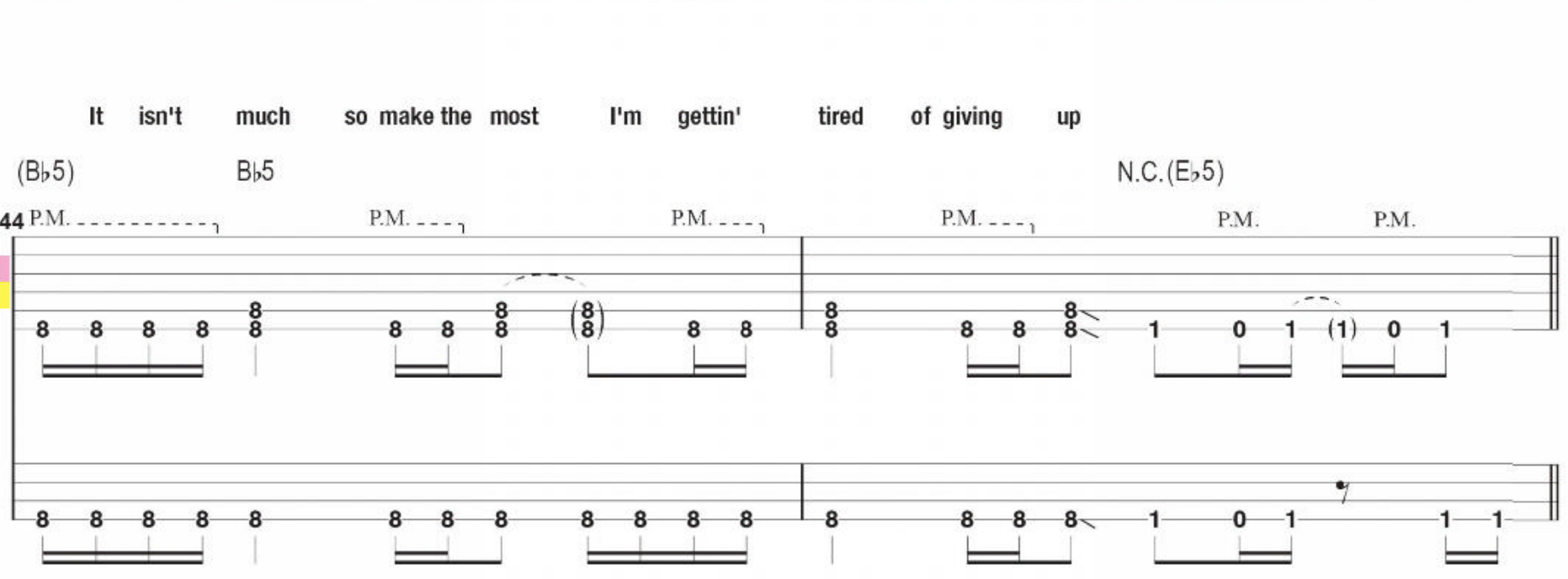


D **1st Verse** (0:45)

I've waited Been patient Dedicated in the name of being more Givin' all that I have but you want more



I've changed and I'm changing It's not over There's still time left



It isn't much so make the most I'm gettin' tired of giving up

E Pre-chorus (1:03)

Searching for silence Bring me

(B♭5) (C5) (D5) D5

Gtr. 2

(w/delay effect)

46 P.M. P.M. P.M.

Gtr. 1

P.M.

Bass

*Notes originally played one octave lower on 5-string bass.

F Chorus (1:12, 1:55, 3:16)

hope Take me home I think I'm ready to be on my own Close my

D5 F5 B♭5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A eight times (see bar 21)

50

Bass

2nd time, skip ahead to I *(bar 70)*

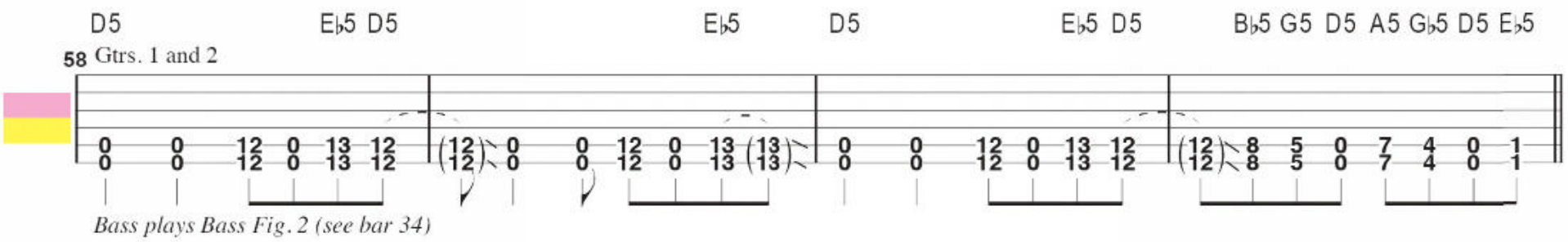
3rd time, skip ahead to L *Outro (bar 99)*

eyes Lay me down I think it's time that I take some time to be alone again

D5 F5 B♭5

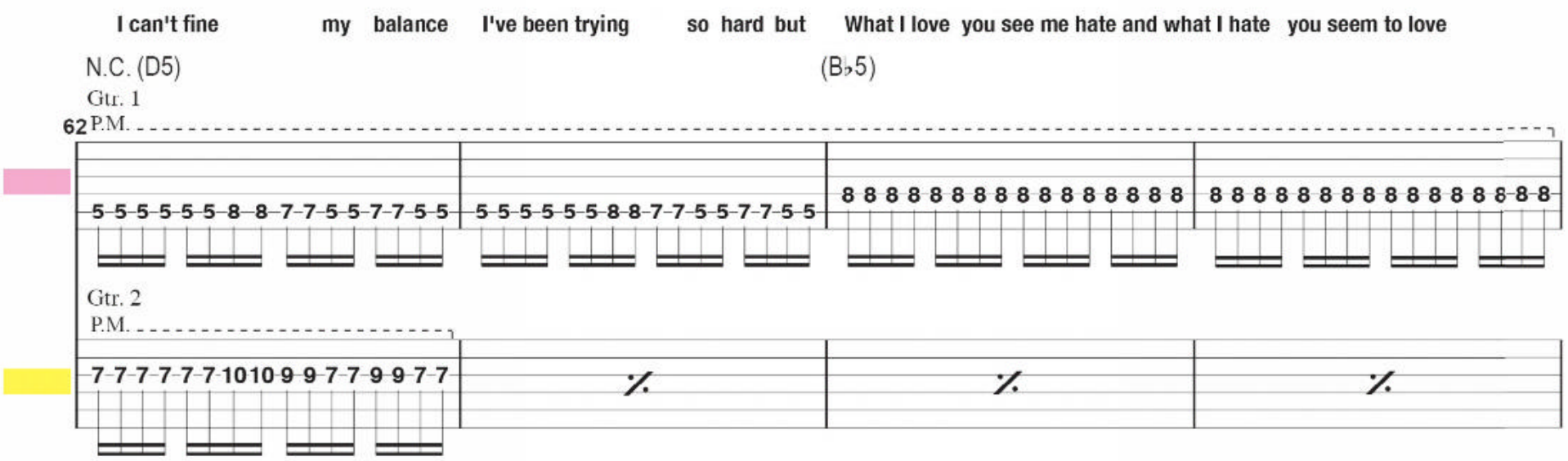
54 P.M.

G (1:29)



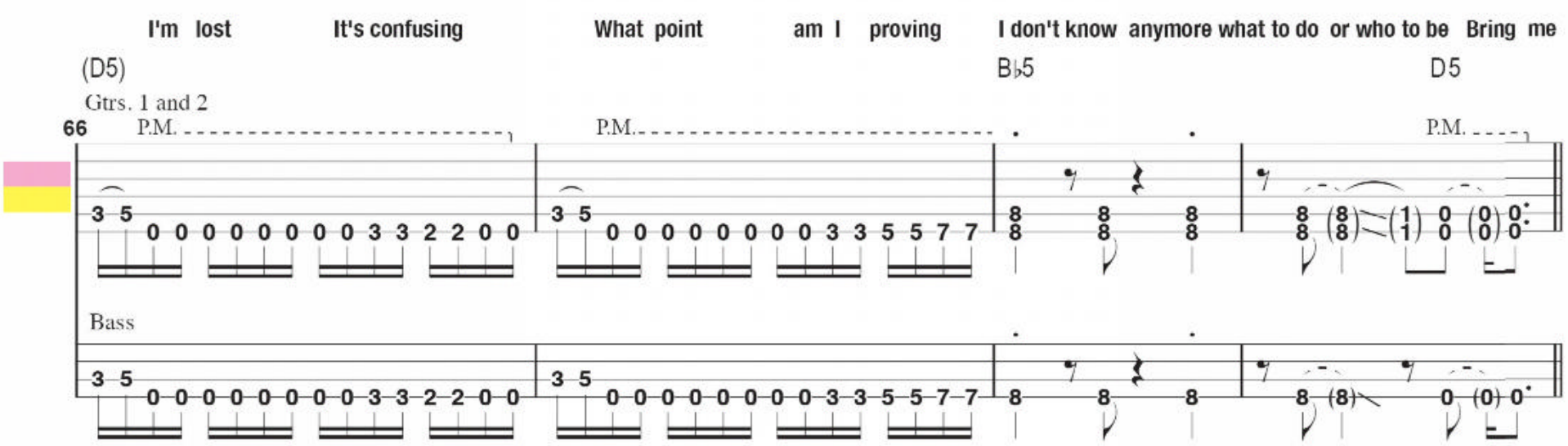
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 34)

H **2nd Verse** (1:38)

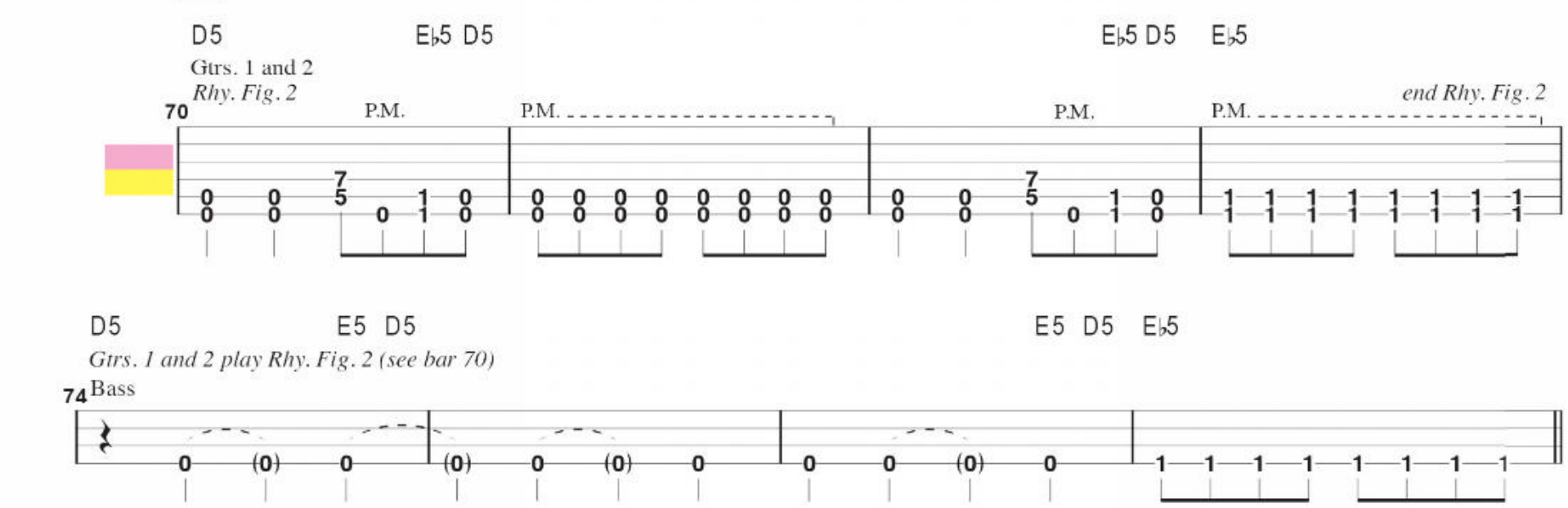


Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 38)

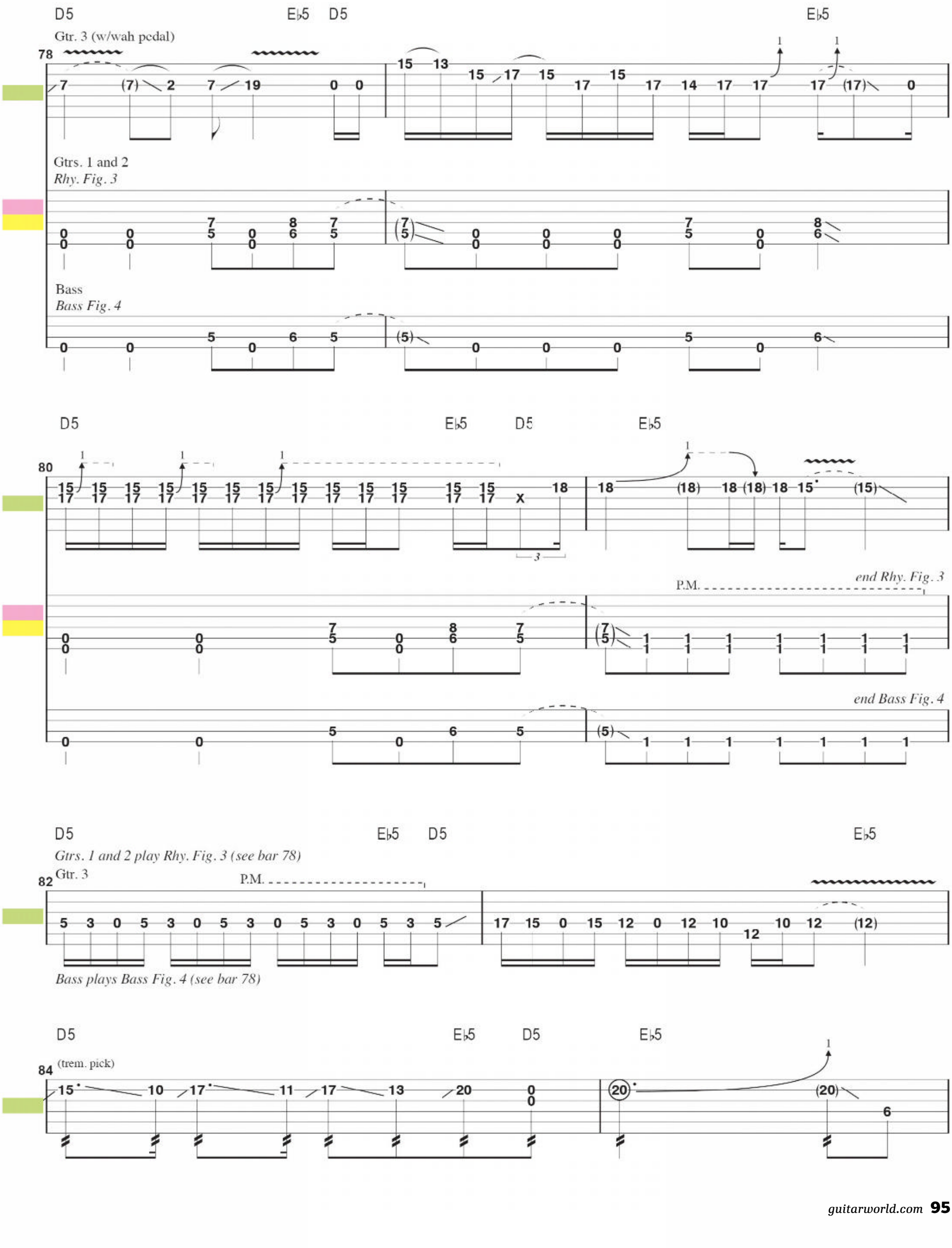
Go back to **F** *Chorus (bar 50)*

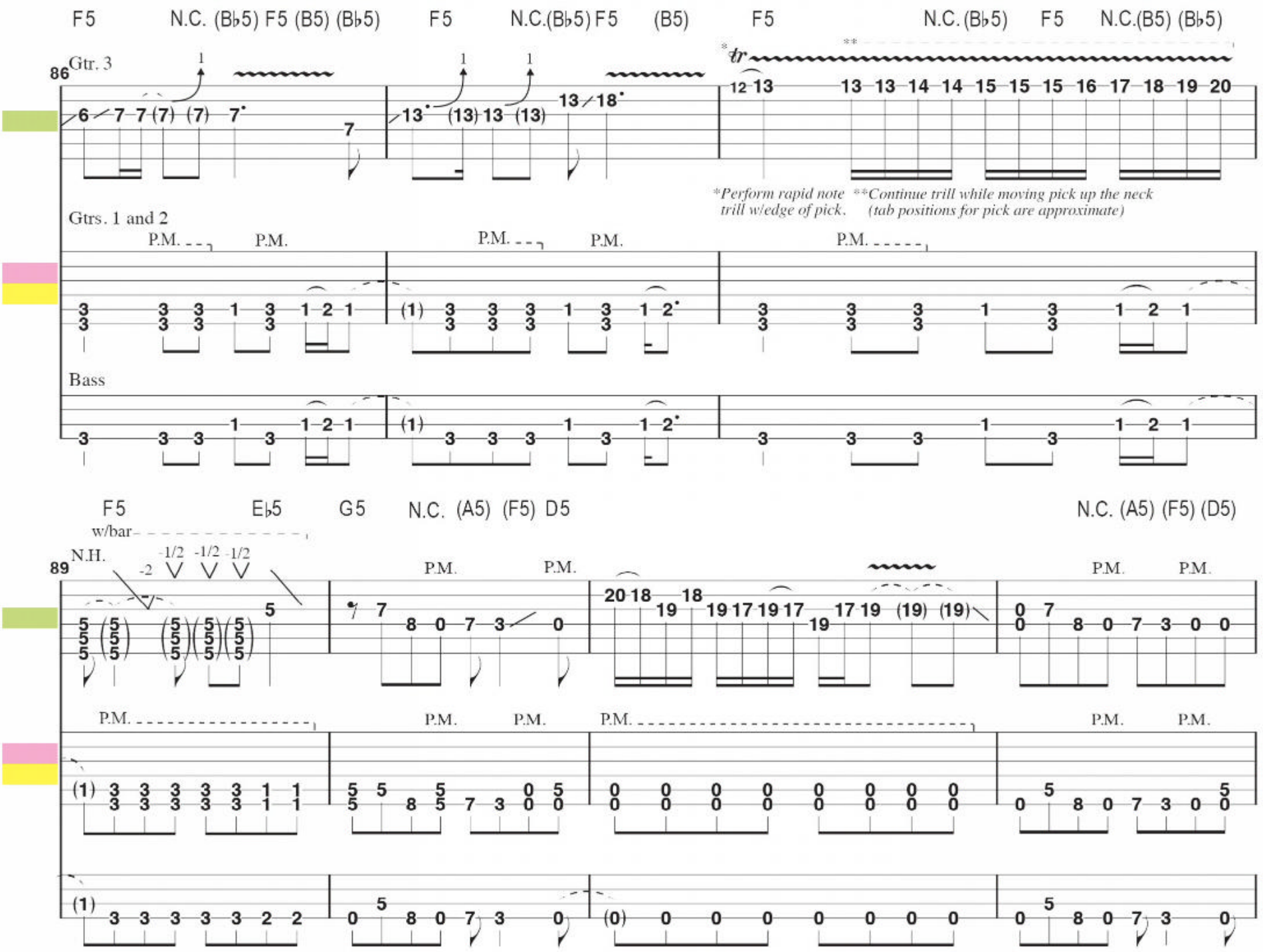


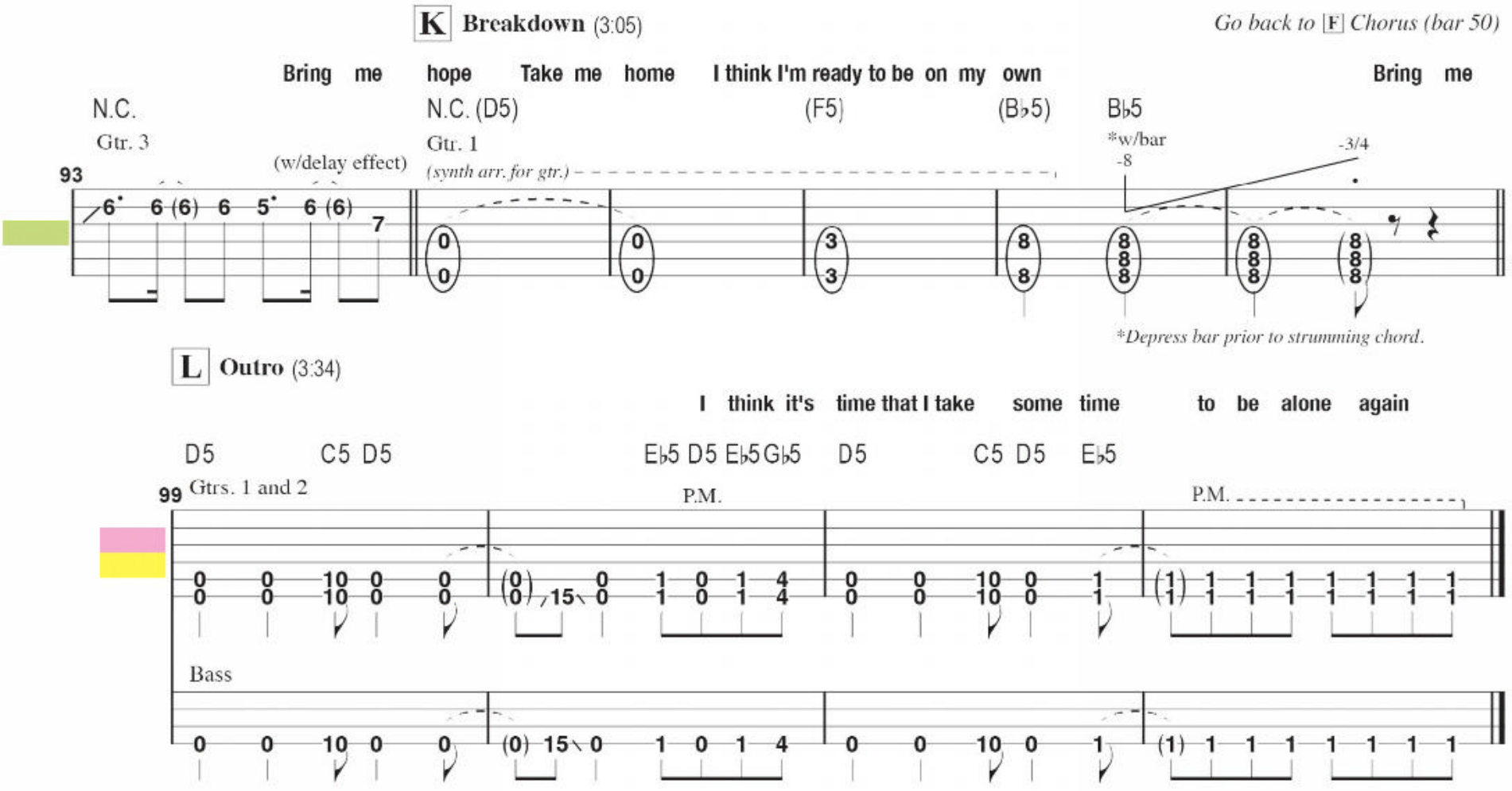
I (2:13)



J **Guitar Solo** (2:30)




F5 N.C. (B♭5) F5 (B5) (B♭5) F5 N.C.(B♭5) F5 (B5) F5 N.C. (B♭5) F5 N.C.(B5) (B♭5)
86 Gtr. 3
tr
*Perform rapid note trill w/edge of pick.
**Continue trill while moving pick up the neck (tab positions for pick are approximate)
Gtrs. 1 and 2
P.M.
Bass
F5 E♭5 G5 N.C. (A5) (F5) D5 N.C. (A5) (F5) (D5)
89 N.H.
w/bar
-1/2 -1/2 -1/2
P.M.


K Breakdown (3:05)
Go back to F Chorus (bar 50)
Bring me hope Take me home I think I'm ready to be on my own Bring me
N.C. N.C. (D5) (F5) (B♭5) B♭5
Gtr. 3
(w/delay effect)
Gtr. 1
(synth arr. for gtr.)
93
*w/bar
-8
-3/4
*Depress bar prior to strumming chord.
L Outro (3:34)
I think it's time that I take some time to be alone again
D5 C5 D5 E♭5 D5 E♭5 G♭5 D5 C5 D5 E♭5
99 Gtrs. 1 and 2
P.M.
Bass

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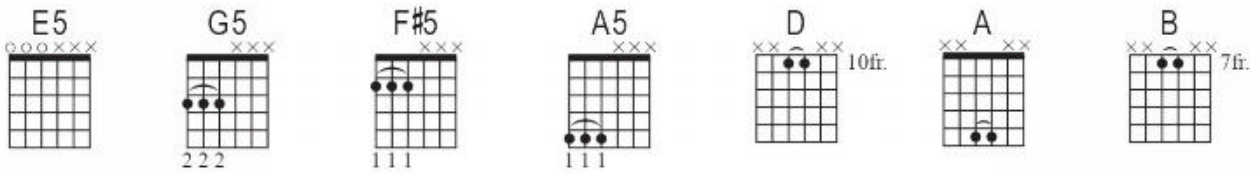
Blackfoot

As heard on **STRIKES**

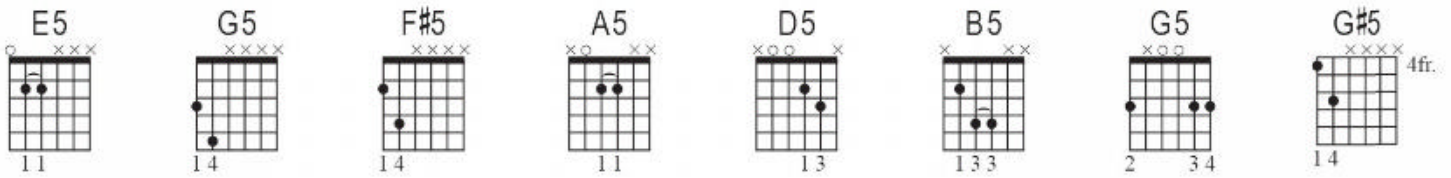
Words and Music by **PAUL ROBERT MEDLOCKE** • *Transcribed by* **JEFF PERRIN**

Guitars 1 and 3 are in open E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G♯, B, E).

Chords for Gtr. 1 (open E tuning):

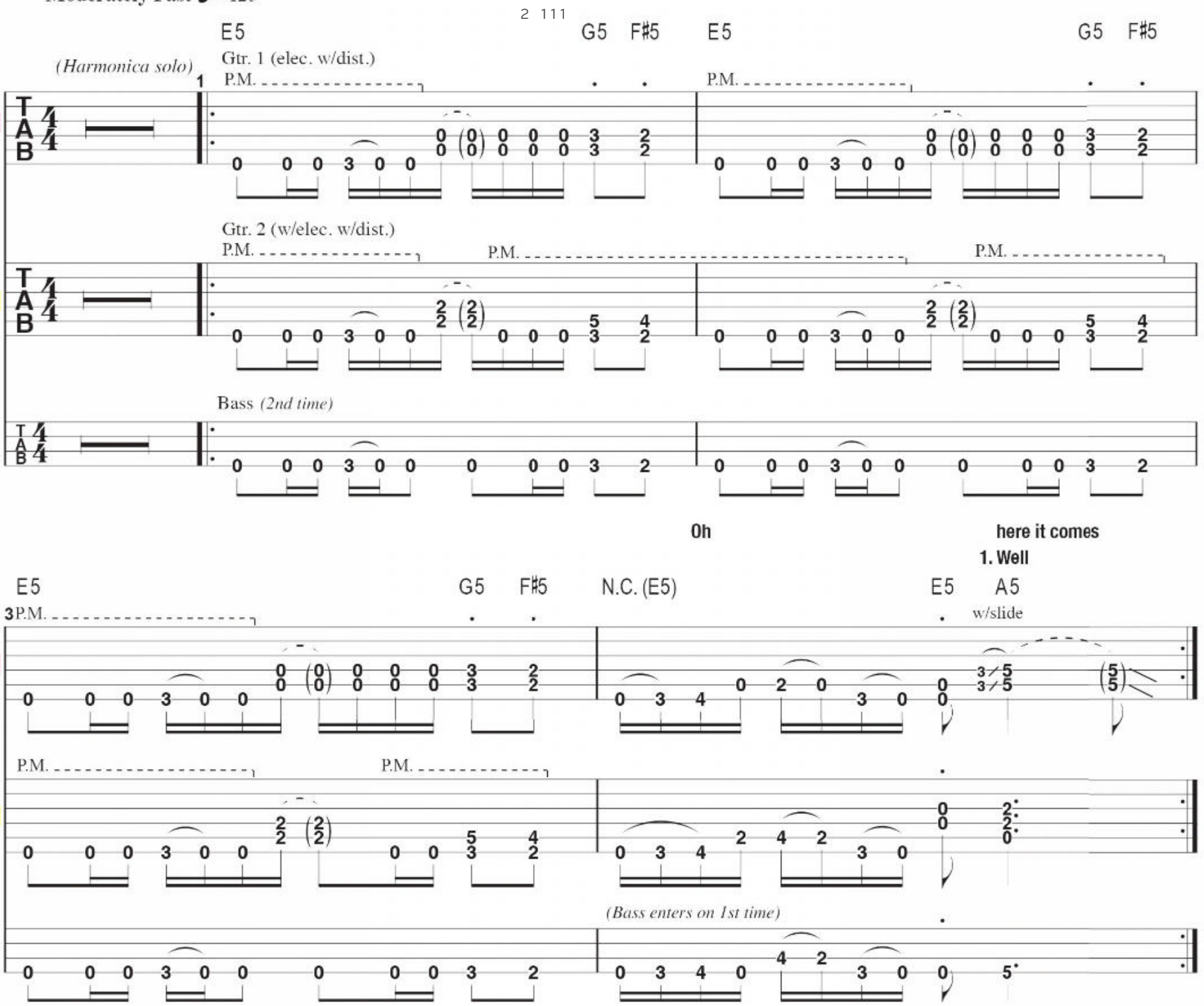


Chords for Gtr. 2 (standard tuning):



A Intro (0:00) (0:38)

Moderately Fast ♩ = 123



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B **Verses** (0:53, 1:17, 2:28) (♩ = 121)

(1.) train — train — Take me on out of this
(2.) leavin' — here — I'm just a raggedy hobo
(3.) goodbye — pretty — mama — get yourself a money man

E5 G5 F♯5 E5 G5 F♯5 E5 G5 F♯5

5 P.M.

(repeat previous bar)

P.M. P.M.

town — Lord I'm — Train leavin' Goodbye — pretty — train here — mama — Lord I'm just a Lord

E5 D A

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1, 2nd and 3rd times (see below bar 27)

8 P.M. w/slide

P.M. P.M.

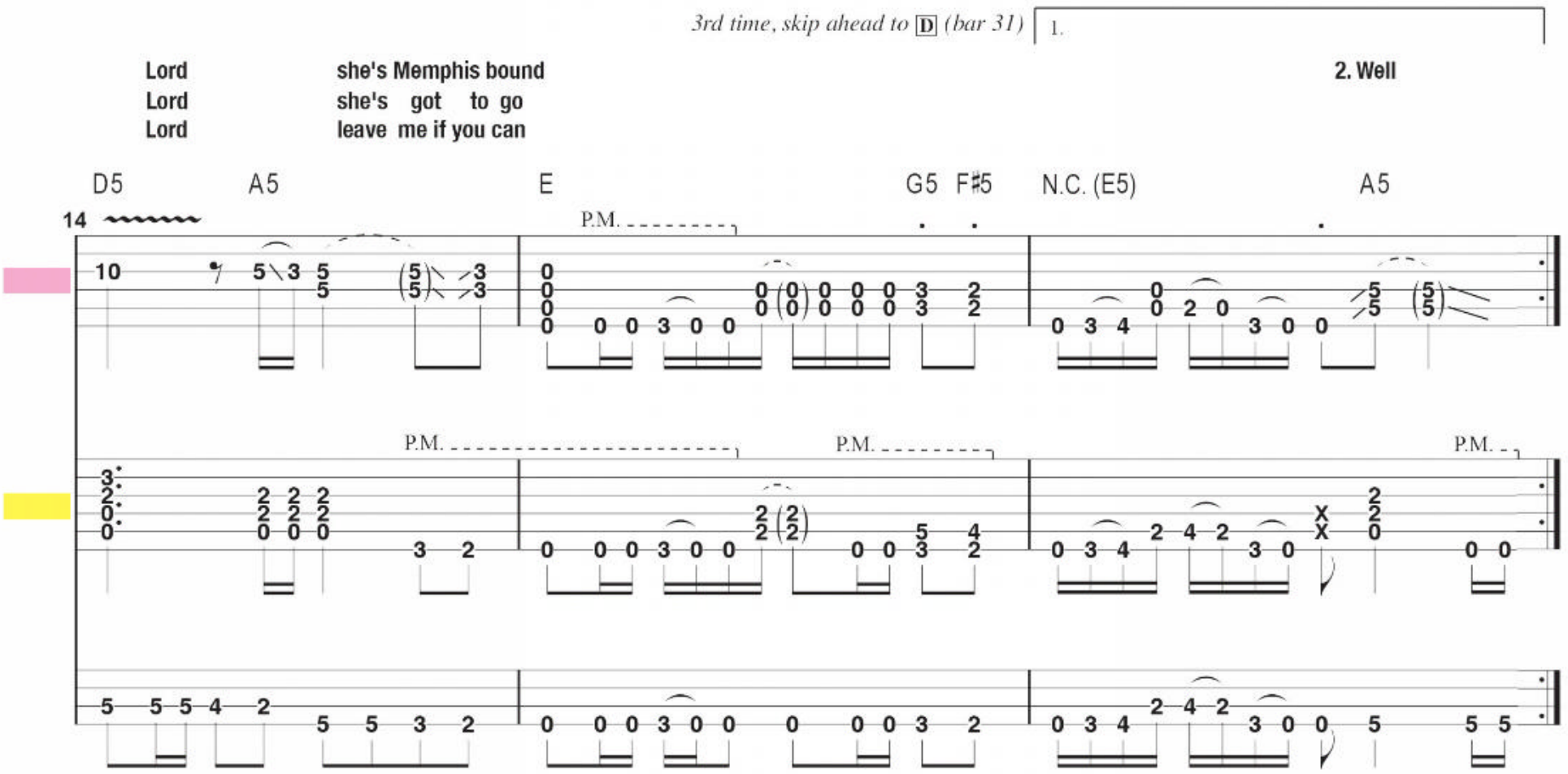
take me on out of this town — Well that woman I'm in love with
raggedy hobo — Well that woman I'm in love with
get yourself a money man — You take that midnight train to Memphis

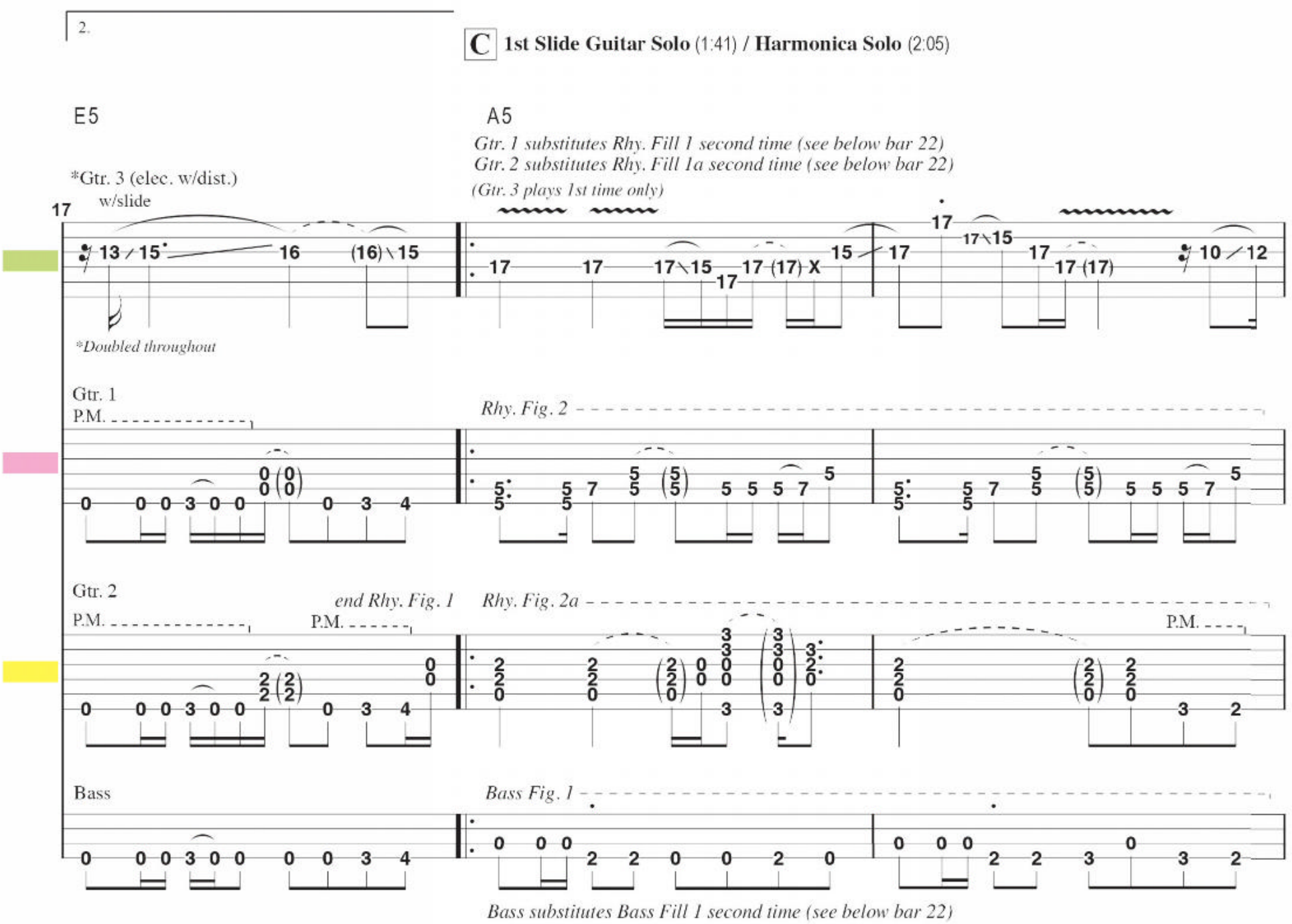
E5 G5 F♯5 E5 B

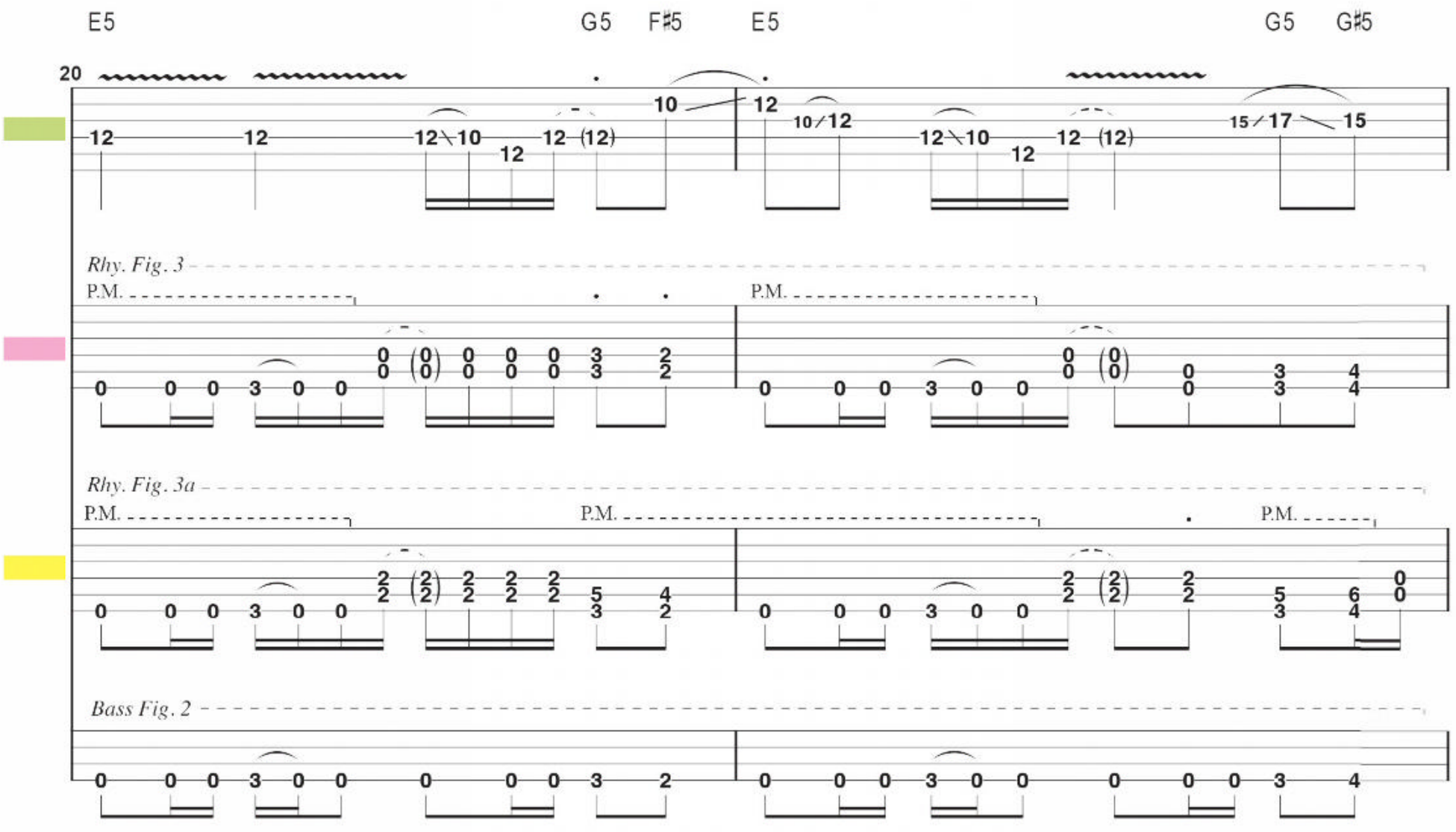
11 P.M. P.M. w/slide

Rhy. Fig. 1 (takes 2nd ending for recall)

P.M. P.M. P.M.


3rd time, skip ahead to D (bar 31)
1.
Lord she's Memphis bound
Lord she's got to go
Lord leave me if you can
2. Well
D5
A5
E
G5
F♯5
N.C. (E5)
A5
14
P.M.

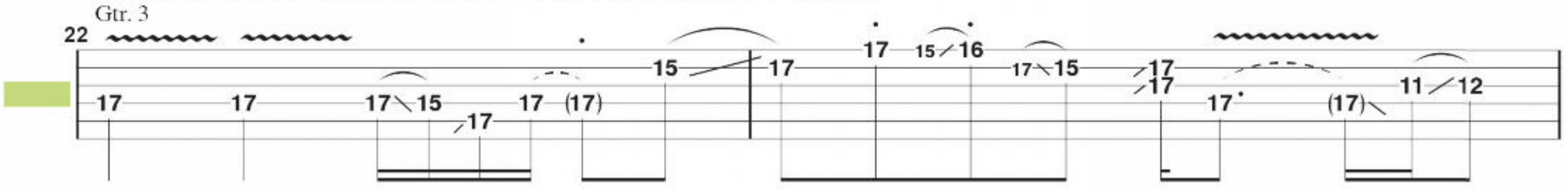

2.
C 1st Slide Guitar Solo (1:41) / Harmonica Solo (2:05)
E5
A5
*Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)
w/slide
17
*Doubled throughout
Gtr. 1 tacet
Gtr. 1
P.M.
Rhy. Fig. 2
Gtr. 2
P.M.
end Rhy. Fig. 1
Rhy. Fig. 2a
Bass
Bass Fig. 1
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 second time (see below bar 22)
Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1a second time (see below bar 22)
(Gtr. 3 plays 1st time only)
Bass substitutes Bass Fill 1 second time (see below bar 22)



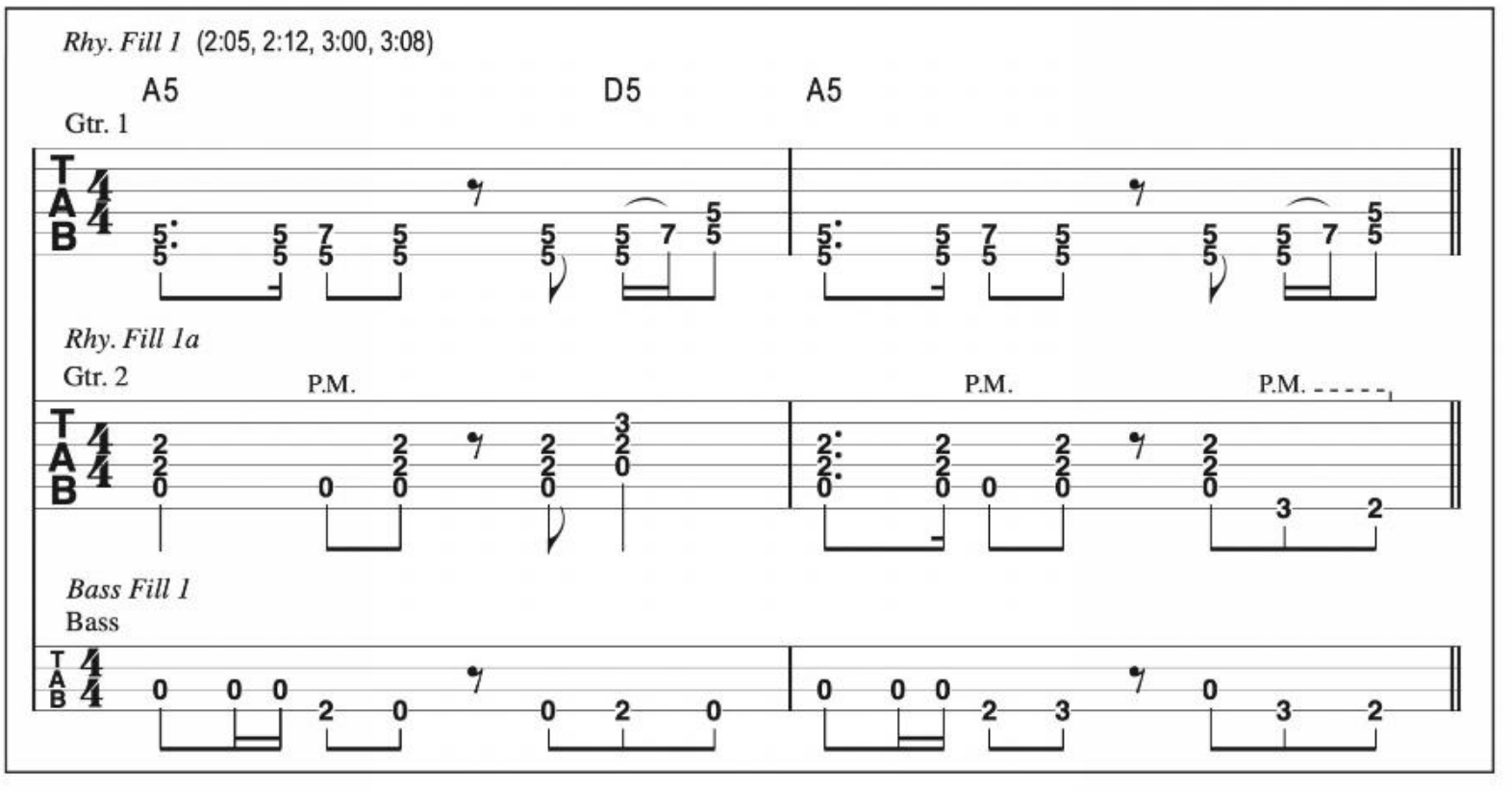
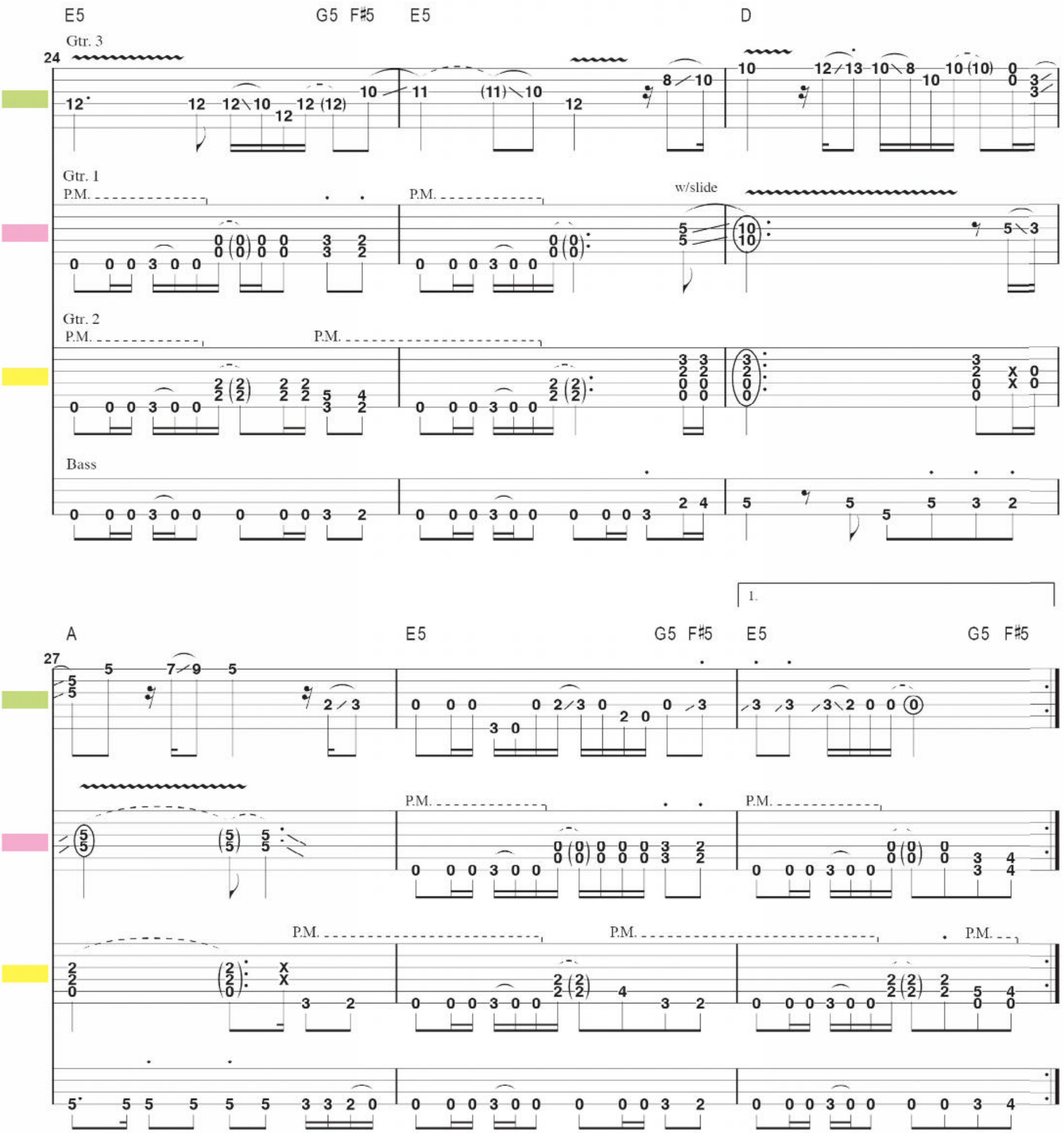
A5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 first time (see bar 18), Rhy. Fill 1 second time (see below)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a first time (see bar 18), Rhy. Fill 1a second time (see below)

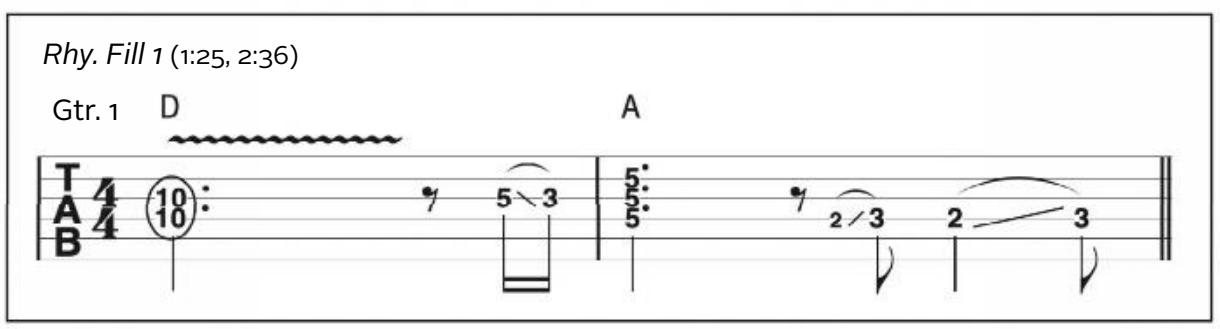
Gtr. 3

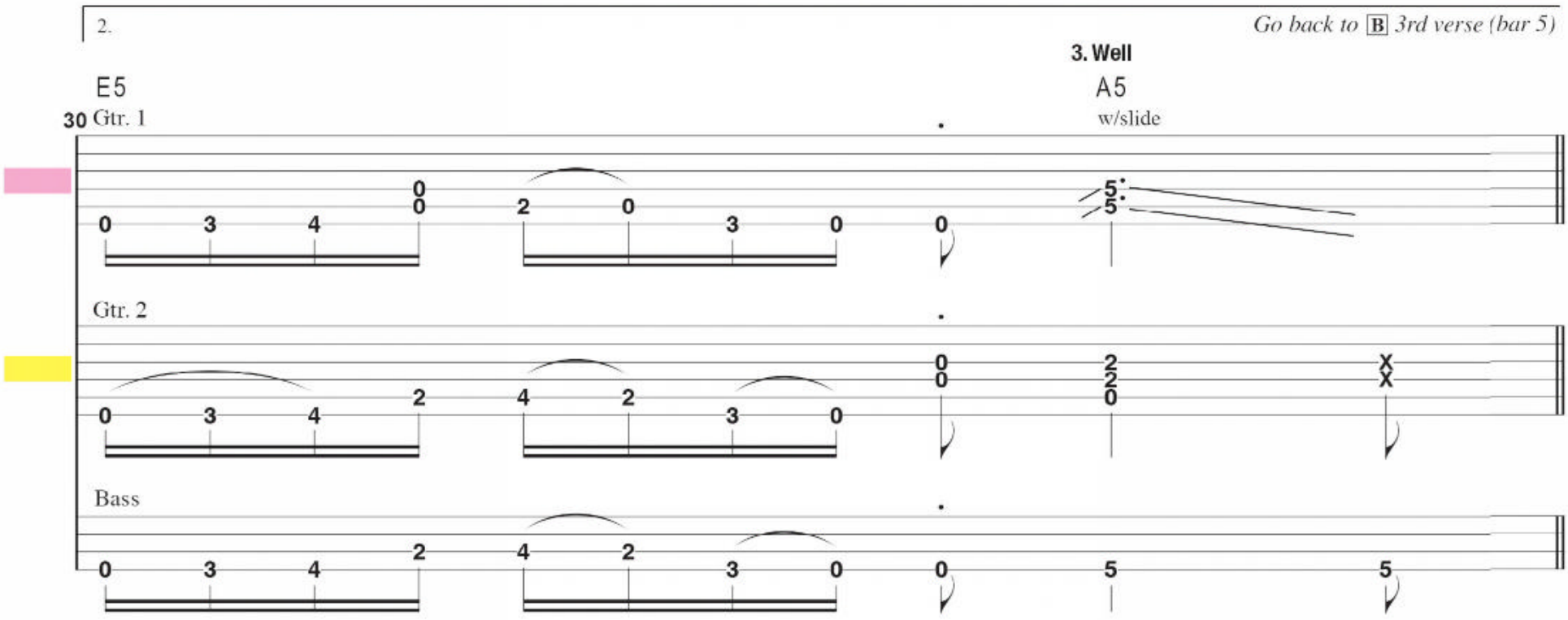


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 first time (see bar 18), Bass Fill 1 second time (see below)

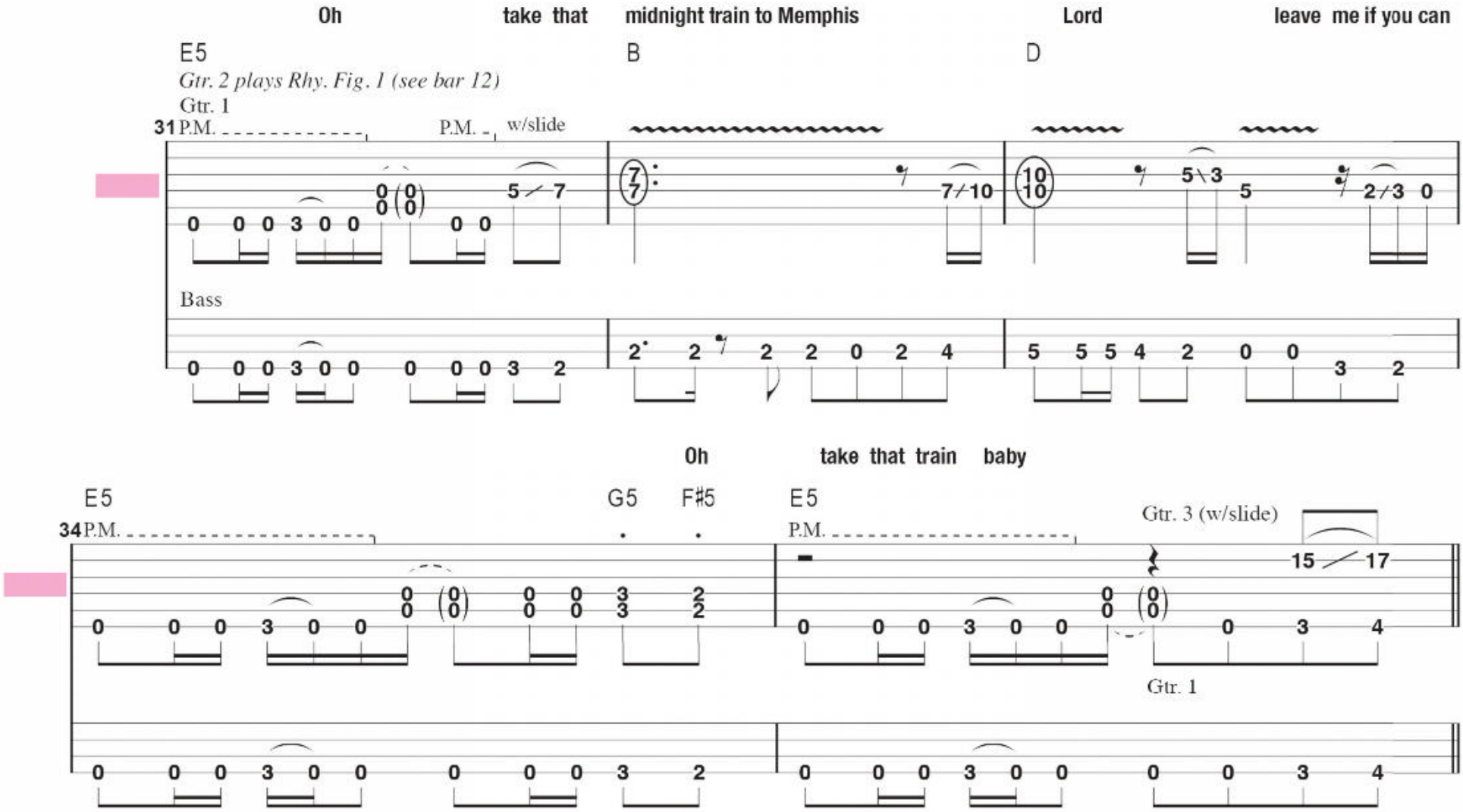


Rhy. Fill 1 (1:25, 2:36)

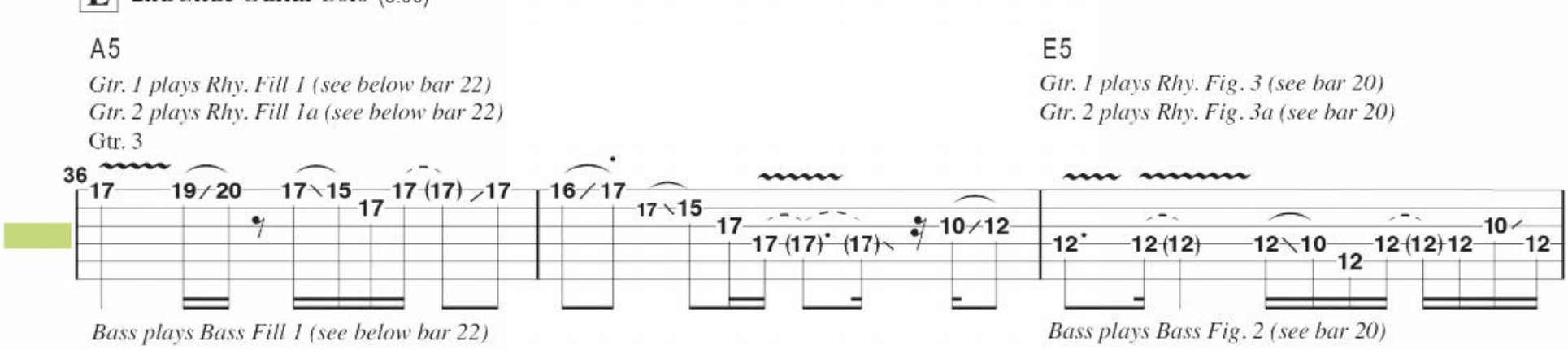




D (2:50)



E **2nd Slide Guitar Solo** (3:00)



A5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fill 1 (see below bar 22)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1a (see below bar 22)

39

Bass plays Bass Fill 1 (see below bar 22)

E5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 (see bar 20)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 3a (see bar 20)

42

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 20)

F Outro (3:16)

Freely

(resume original tempo)

A5

Gtr. 3

44

(Snare drum)

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass

(decrease tempo)

N.C. (F♯5) (E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 3

48 w/slide

Gtr. 2

1/2 1/2

Bass

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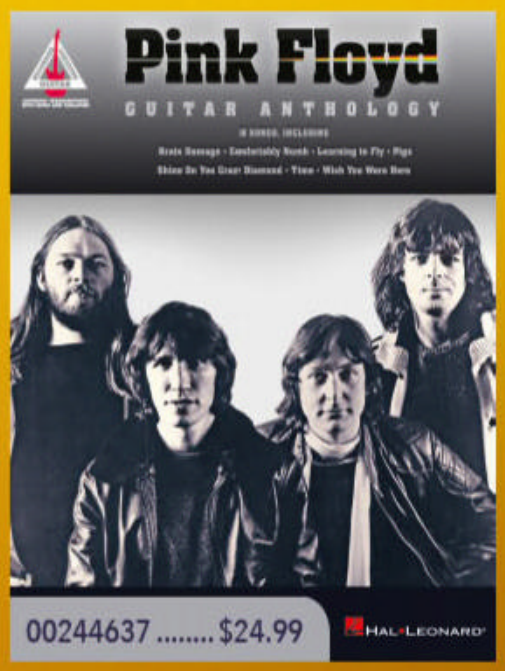

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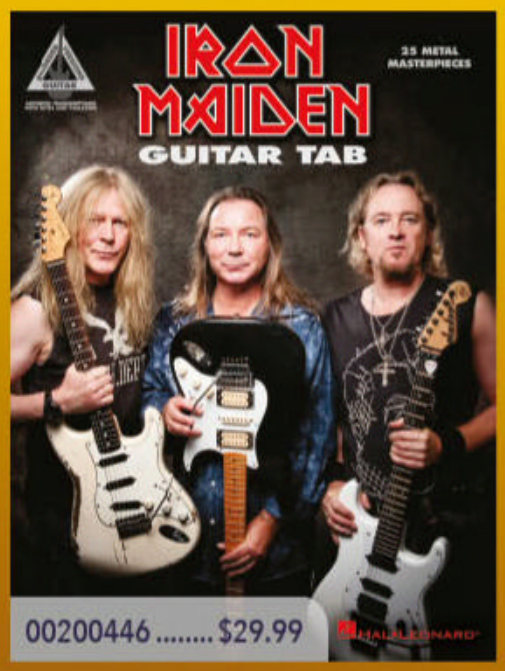

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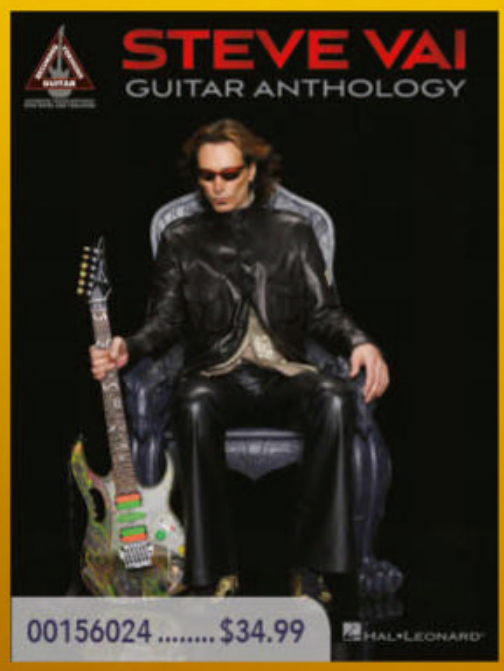

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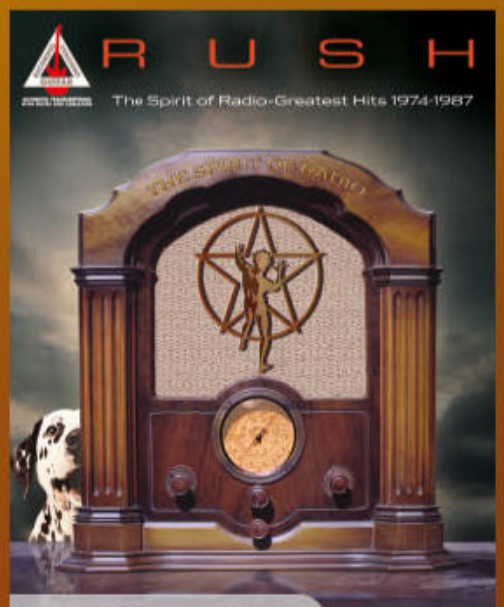

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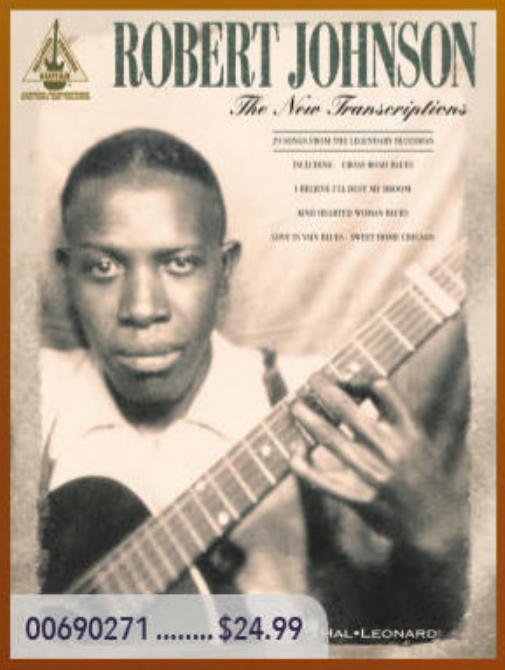

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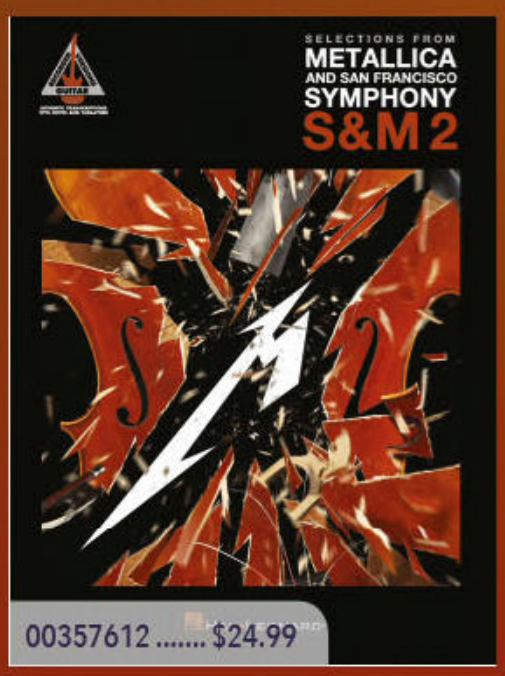

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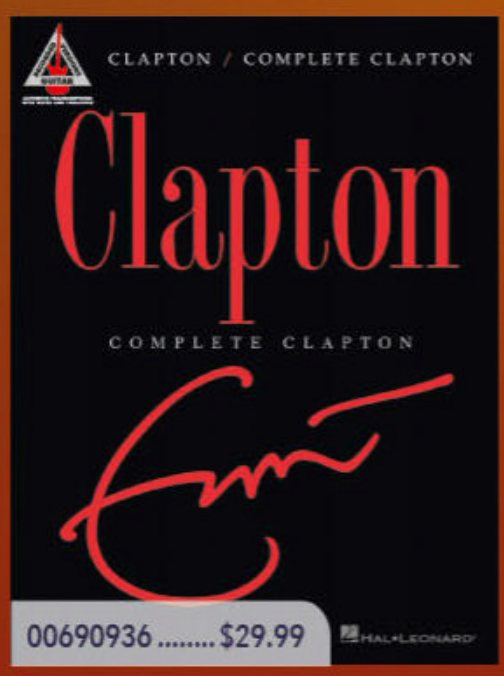

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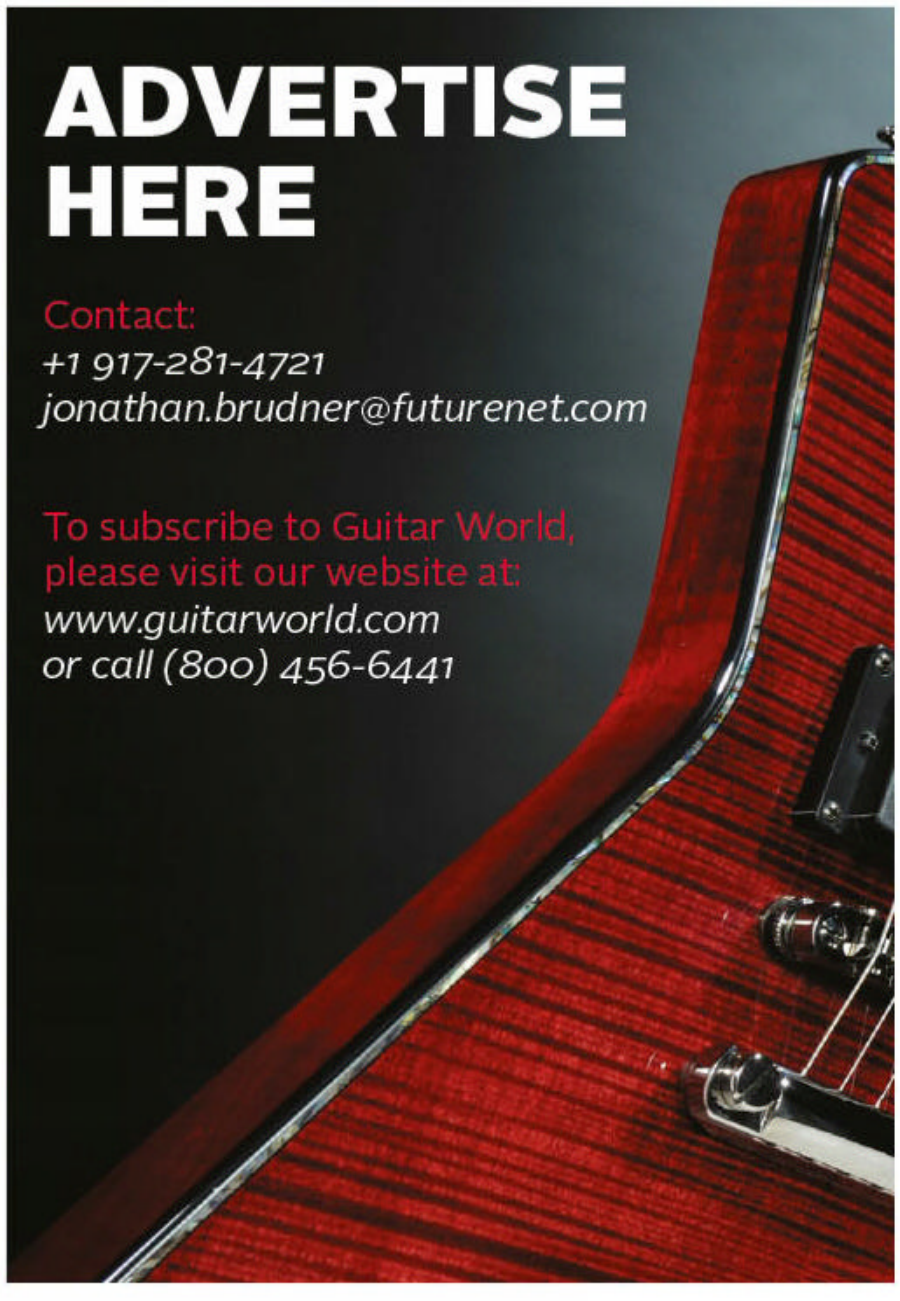
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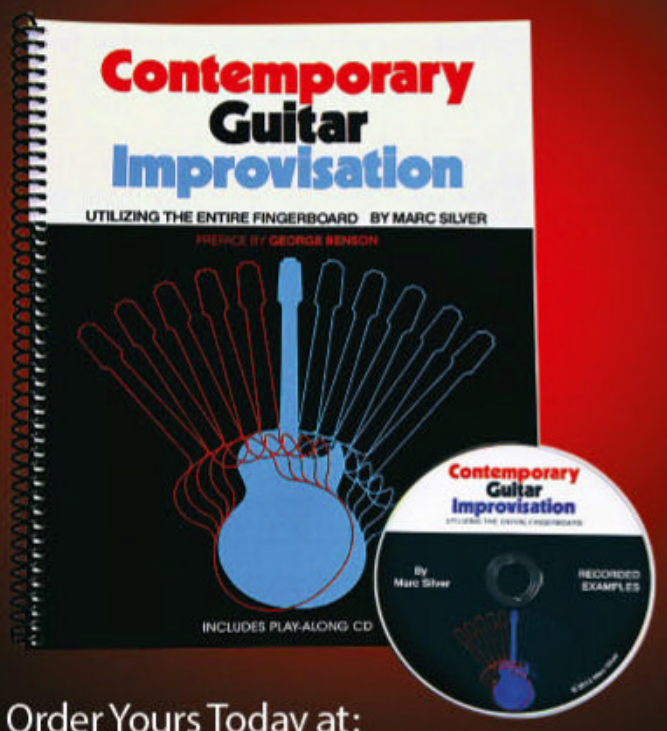

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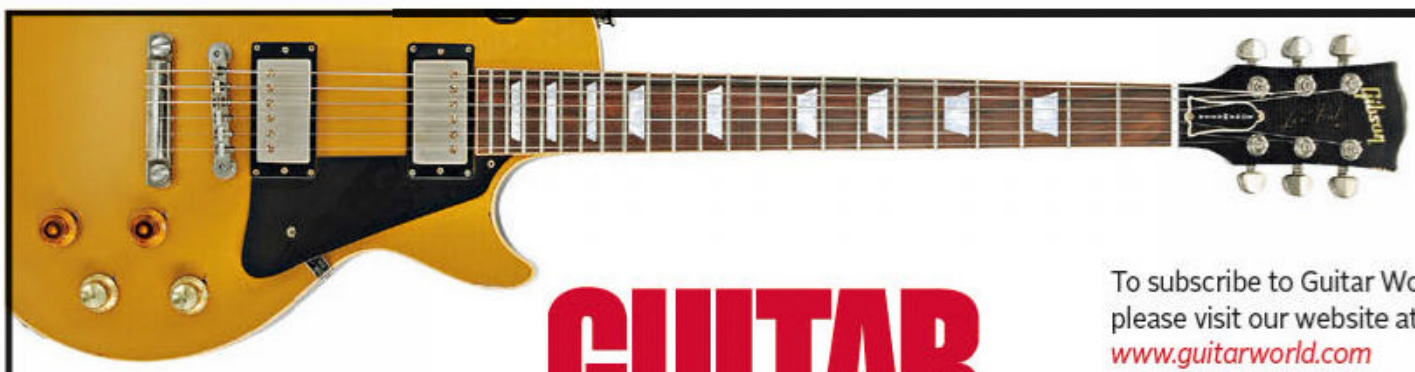
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BY CHRIS GILL

1955-60 FENDER DELUXE 5E3

CATEGORY: COMBO AMP

ONE OF THE greatest amps of all time also happens to be one of the simplest — the narrow-panel tweed Fender Deluxe with the 5E3 circuit, produced between 1955 and 1960. With a single 12-inch speaker, three control knobs (instrument volume, mic volume and tone), four inputs, five tubes and 15 watts of output, the 5E3 Deluxe was one of the smaller amps that Fender offered at the time, with only the Champ, Princeton and Harvard being smaller. However, its simple, straightforward circuit and full-range 12-inch speaker deliver tone and volume output that is much bigger than its modest size suggests.

The 5E3 Deluxe circuit provides only a minimal amount of clean headroom before the onset of its luscious, harmonically rich overdrive, which wasn't very attractive to players in the Fifties but made the amp a studio (and sometimes live) secret weapon for numerous players in the Seventies. Notable examples include numerous tracks recorded by Billy Gibbons with ZZ Top in the Seventies, Don Felder's legendary solos on "Hotel California" (and other Eagles songs), Larry Carlton's immortal solos on Steely Dan's "Kid Charlemagne" and, of course, Neil Young's proto-grunge crunch with Crazy Horse. In short, the narrow-panel tweed Deluxe defined overdrive long before the first overdrive pedal was invented.

The 5E3 Deluxe preserves a guitar's natural, unadulterated tone while also making pretty much anything plugged into it sound bigger and better. When driven to overdrive (generally past 5 with single-coils or 3 with humbuckers; note that the controls go up to 12), it produces harmonically rich tones with a delicious upper midrange chime and fat lower midrange that hits an ideal sweet spot for singing solos. The treble is brilliant without being shrill. If there's any flaw, it's the tendency of the bass to get a bit fuzzy and farty with the volume control(s) set above 10, but some consider that a "beauty mark." The two volume controls are interactive (even with nothing plugged into the other channel, although the two channels can also be jumpered together) and the tone control also affects volume and gain, allowing the three knobs to provide an impressive range of tasty tones and textures.

The stock 5E3 Deluxe is close to perfection, but it's also easy to tweak for players who can't leave things alone. If you want tighter bass, install a more efficient speaker, swap the 5Y3 rectifier tube for a 5U4 or 5AR4 or replace the stock 6V6 power amp tubes with 6L6s. If you want more grit and grunge, replace the 12AY7 in the V1 position with a 12AX7. Conversely, swapping the 12AX7 at the V2 position with a 12AU7 provides more clean headroom, albeit at the expense of volume output.

The price of an original narrow panel tweed Deluxe has recently soared past $10,000, but fortunately Fender makes a reissue, dozens of builders offer accurate clones or you can save a few bucks by building one yourself from a kit. But even if you have to rent or borrow one (please don't steal), every guitarist should try a real 5E3 Deluxe during their lifetime to experience just how dynamic, soul-shaking and simply *good* guitar tone can be.

An original 1955 Fender Deluxe 5E3, photographed in 2020 by Olly Curtis. "Every guitarist should try a real 5E3 Deluxe during their lifetime to experience just how dynamic, soul-shaking and simply *good* guitar tone can be," Chris Gill says

SUGGESTED SETTINGS

LARRY CARLTON SOLO

Instrument input 1
Instrument Volume: 4
Mic Volume: 4
Tone: 12

TIP: *Use a semi-hollow 335-style guitar with humbuckers, select the neck pickup and roll the guitar's tone control down to 3 or 4.*

BILLY GIBBONS RHYTHM

Mic input 1,jumper from Mic 2 to Instrument 1
Instrument Volume: 6
Mic Volume: 10, Tone: 6

TIP: *A Les Paul Standard's bridge humbucker sounds wicked, but a Tele or Strat is mighty fine, too.*

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